FRONT DOORS—BACK DOORS: THE HYPOCRISY OF MARK TWAIN TOWARDS HIS SERVANTS

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ABSTRACT

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This study is a historical examination of the attitude and behavior of Mark Twain (also known as Samuel Langhorne Clemens) in his relationship with his household servants during the Gilded Age (1870-1900) in Hartford, Connecticut. "Gilded Age" was coined by Twain in a satirical exposé of the corrupt greed in business and politics. Twain suggested dishonesty was disguised beneath a thin golden veil of American propaganda. This period of self-elevation and lavish wealth was contrasted against a poor unskilled working class. Twain, who evolved from lower rungs of society to fortuned heights, makes an ideal study for hypocrisy. Serving as a symbol of the times, this investigation explores his ability to rise above or to succumb to the predisposed mentality of the day. Further, the same biases of class, race, and gender continue to be unresolved issues today in an inviolate hypocritical system of privilege, gilded by wording in a duplicitous Constitution.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ii

LIST OF FIGURES v

LIST OF TABLES vi

CHAPTER

I. THE GILDED AGE AND A DEMAND FOR SERVANTS 1

Introduction 1
Purpose of the Study 16
Statement of the Problem 18
Significance of the Problem 23
Methodology, Literature Review, and Summary 26

II. SERVITUDE IN AMERICA 38

The Basis for American Servitude 38
The Widening Divide among Classes 47
Immigrants Compete for Jobs 58
Gender and Race Biases 66

III. BACK DOORS AS BLACK DOORS 75

Connecticut History and African Americans 75
African Americans in Hartford, Connecticut 81
Servant Comparisons 88
Overcoming Racism 93

IV. NOOK FARM, A HARTFORD COMMUNITY 96

Residents and Their Servants 96
Civic-Minded Benevolence 110
Masters and Mistresses: Roles and Interactions 118

V. MARK TWAIN AND SAMUEL CLEMENS 134

The Man, The Master 134
The Myth 151

VI. CONCLUSION: THE RESOLUTION 156

APPENDIX

A. Map of Nook Farm Neighborhood 167

B. Legend for Nook Farm 168

C. Photographs of Remaining Nook Farm Houses in 2015 169

BIBLIOGRAPHY 185

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Gradual Reduction of Slavery in Connecticut 81

Figure 2. Total Hartford Population Compared to Free and Enslaved African Americans 83

Figure 3. Literacy and Employment of African Americans, Hartford, CT 1870-1880 83

Figure 4. African-American Origins of Birth: Hartford, CT: 1870-1880 84

Figure 5. Clemens' Servant Wage Analysis 92

Figure 6. A Two-Month Salary Record for Harriet Beecher Stowe's Servants 127

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Cultural Hiring Practices in the United States from 1860 to 1900 90

CHAPTER I

THE GILDED AGE AND A DEMAND FOR SERVANTS

In a state where there is no fever of speculation, no inflamed desire for sudden wealth, where the poor are simple-minded and contented, and the rich are all honest and generous, where society is in a condition of primitative purity, and politics is the occupation of only the capable and patriotic.[1]

– Mark Twain, The Gilded Age, 1873

Introduction

The title "Front Doors—Back Doors" is a figurative representation of the division between masters, as employers, and their domestic servants during the Gilded Age. The Gilded Age in United States history was the late nineteenth century, from around 1870 to about 1900. Influenced by the simultaneous Victorian Era (1837-1901), this period was dictated by rules of social conduct affecting race, gender, and class. Both the slavery-wealthy and the rising industrial-rich upper class in the North and expanding West displayed their wealth in lavish lifestyles. Self-centered and self-elevating in the competitive spirit of the ages, they built the bigger home, or traveled to the farthest land, or staffed the most house servants. Thus, the demand for house servants rivaled US slavery, performing the myriad of household tasks which allowed their employers more leisure from the drudgery of these chores.

The term *Gilded Age* (1873) was coined by Mark Twain in a book he authored with writer Charles Dudley Warner, Twain's friend and neighbor. True to Twain's style,

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1. Mark Twain and Charles Warner, *The Gilded Age* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishing, 1904), v.

the book is a satirical commentary on the hypocrisy of the period, gilded [pun intended] with Twain's sharp wit and humor as he exposes social injustices of his day. The quotation above, prefacing the chapter, is an example of his satire. Born poor, Twain became rich and could relate to both social classes. His Hartford household servant staff of seven offers insight into the period and his relationships. His unique position as a writer with access to public and personal thoughts is a portal through which the interactions may be observed. For these reasons, Twain is an ideal study representative of the times, to examine the sincerity of the American ideology of "equality for all" and its shortcoming as flawed "equality for all Anglo males."

Biases towards women, races, and personal economy reinforce an unequal classist society where servants ranked only one step above paupers. Undiminished racial prejudice against African Americans was especially harsh leaving them in a downward spiral of competitive egalitarianism against the continuous influx of white immigrants. Thus, Twain's hiring practice as well as treatment of servants serves to reveal his hypocrisy as characteristic of American society. Though a few federal laws changed towards blacks in the passing of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, the heart of the country did not appear to have been in sync as reflected in antiblack state laws and behaviors towards this most vulnerable group of servants, most in need of uplift and equal access to America's ideals. The United States had an opportunity to build a strong citizen-based society, yet it chose to subdue women's roles, the working class, and African Americans while a minority of men excelled in wealth and power. Seemingly, this mentality has continued over time, costing Americans jobs, loss of class status, and

dignity. The decisions of disregard for all appear to have contributed to a country growing in debt to the very nations it sought to surpass in economic power.

"Power" is typically the central theme when historians write about the Gilded Age, and it is demonstrated in several ways though the glamour of the wealthy, national economic growth, political corruption, and labor unions. The telling of this period seems to veer in one of two directions, often connected with the overlapping Progressive Era (1890s-1920s). Supporters of the wealthy have written biographies on their contributions to the growth of America, and the philanthropic evidence of their generosity in structures and foundations still functioning for the common good. Social and political historians who illustrate the positive aspects of the period are challenged by critics because of their focus on giant industrial financiers.

Opponents similar to Jack Beatty argue their fortunes were made at the expense of the working class and excluding their presence is an omission of history.[2] This is analogous to telling of wealth achieved during U.S. slavery through the sacrifice of enslaved African Americans without including their voice. Preeminent social historian John Hope Franklin is known for his scholarship that focused on southern history and racial politics. Franklin taught and authored utilizing a method of periodization best illustrated in his book *From Slavery to Freedom* (1947). He demonstrates the importance of historical trajectory in periods through history as a necessary component of American history. Not only does he capture distinct periods of American history, he presents a

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2. Jack Beatty, *The Age of Betrayal: The Triumph of Money in America, 1865-1900* (New York: Knopf, 2007), 296.

balanced telling of whites in power and the effect on African Americans subject to that power.[3]

His inclusion of bringing black presence from beneath empty pages in history is comparable to including the telling of events about the servants beneath the nineteenth century gilding. Similar to Franklin, embracing the workers subjected to social injustices of class, race, and gender constructs a historical expression that is fairer and more complete. Supporting this position through the reveal of low wage earners creates a historical equilibrium to the writings of Gilded Age glamour. One of Franklin's achievements was to bring a consciousness to the presence and significance of African Americans in American history—a long overdue recognition and honor. In the shadow of his leading, this study hopes to bring awareness and balance to the story of domestic workers during the late nineteenth century.

Relevant writings under Twain's (Clemens') pen inform us about the standards he used to evaluate people. He often used character comments in published and informal writings, such as letters and journals, to describe the people about whom he wrote. According to Dr. Orion W. Marden and cultural historian Warren Susman, this was typical because one of the distinctions of the nineteenth century is that it was distinguished by the *character of a person* in contrast to the twentieth century that

3. John Hope Franklin, *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African Americans,* 9th ed., (New York: Knopf Publishing, 1947). This book caused a shift in global consciousness of African Americans, contributed to a more complete American history, and served as the foundation for creating studies in African American history.

emphasized *personality.*[4] Biases of the day—class, gender, and race—impacted traits of character and qualities of personality. The difference between character and personality is explained by Alex Lickerman, M.D. Personality is the disposition or temperament of a person, usually quickly decided in a first impression, commonly referred to as "snap judgments." These easily observable, mostly immutable hereditary traits include judging people as energetic, funny, shy, lazy, overly serious, and more. Character, on the other hand, takes more time to ascertain. A person is said to be able to mask true character for a limited time.[5]

According to Lickerman, the reason character traits such as virtue, honesty, and kindness take longer to observe is because they only reveal themselves in specific and often uncommon circumstances.[6] Traits are based on beliefs and though beliefs can be changed, it is not an easy process. It is why many companies call references and require a three- to six-month probationary period, depending on the position. For masters as employers making decisions about strangers hired to work during the day in their homes or as live-in domestics, character would not only be important to capture through references, it would be a monitoring tool during employyment. The references, the interview, and on-the-job monitoring would determine if a worker were hired and the duration of their employ. The majority of house servants were females who had no other

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4. Orion S. Marden, *Character: The Greatest Thing in the World* (NY: Thomas Y Crowell & Co., 1899); Warren Susman, *Pilgrimage to Paris* (University Microfilm Publishers, 1979), 217-221, accessed September 11, 2014, http://www.Openlibrary.org/publishers/university_microfilms/warrensusman.

5. Alex Lickerman, M.D., "Happiness in This World," *Psychology Today* (April 3, 2011), accessed September 10, 2014, http://www.psychologytoday.com/happiness-in-world/201104/personality-vs-character.

6. Ibid.

options, than working twelve to fifteen hour days for a pittance.[7] Marriage and factory jobs, in that order, rescued these damsels from their distress who were primarily young girls working as nursery maids, young women as house maids, and older cooks. Males did not fare much better on the social ladder, but generally, they had more options.

Nonetheless, character was a factor for males and females. For example, four prominent character traits of women were piety, purity, submission, and domesticity.[8] Therefore, these would be ideal for house workers in imitation of their mistress. Likewise, men, although more valued in a patriarchal society, were expected to possess certain character traits: competence and trustworthiness would be at the top of the list. However, submission for domestics was necessary for both sexes. Masters and mistresses needed obedience in servants above all else. Subject to a master's beck and call, the dissimilarity between servants and their employers was glaring: increased wealth, leisure, and power as opposed to poverty, little leisure, and no power.

While house servants struggled to survive in the North and West, the entire economy in the South was in peril. The Gilded Age overlapped the rebuilding of the South during Reconstruction (1865-1877) where wealth was but a memory of antebellum yesteryears. The overview, then, is that America continued to be divided after the war, but in a different way. Previously, the whole nation was directly or indirectly in the slave business. The industrial driven North and West continued to build on fortunes derived during slavery, by maintaining useful businesses, creating new inventions, and crafting

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7. Kattie Mark, "Domestic Workers" (master's thesis, Evergreen State College, Olympia, WA, 2002), 10.

8. Barbara Welter, "*The Cult of True Womanhood 1820-1860,*" *American Quarterly* 18, no. 2 (1966): 151-174.

new endeavors—all with profit in the forefront. The South, left in postwar economic ruin, was not the only contrast during this period.

Characterized by rapid economic growth, America surpassed Britain's industrialization. Railroads were at the height of expansion with factories, mining, and finance competing for second place. Real wages for some people increased 60 percent between 1860 and 1890 and continued after that.[9] It was a period of contrasts as the rich built their wealth and the poor struggled to survive, there seemed to be a contradiction in the words upon which the nation was founded. First, the Declaration of Independence states, "...that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness."[10] Second, the Preamble to the Constitution reads, "We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union . . . promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Prosperity...,"[11] and these words are echoed in Lincoln's 1864 Gettysburg Address as a nation of, for, and by the people. These were words Americans lived by, fueling their hopes and dreams. Even so, it was a time when the country made mistakes, figuring it out as they evolved, and forging onward in spite of many living in poverty in what was becoming the richest land on earth.

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9. The Census Bureau reported in 1892 that the average annual wage per industrial worker (including men, women, and children) rose from $380 in 1880 to $564 in 1890, a gain of 48%; United States Census Office, 11th census, 1890 (1892). *Census Bulletin*, 2.

10. The Declaration of Independence of the United States of America: A Transcription, paragraph 2, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC, accessed November 12, 2014, http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration_transcript.html.

11. The Preamble to the Constitution of the United States of America: A Transcription, paragraph 1, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC, accessed November 12, 2014, http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/constitution-workshop/images/Constitution_Pg1of4_AC-txt.pdf.

One of the repeated challenges was unsynchronized accelerated growth. Despite overbuilding that caused two national depressions, the Panic of 1873 and the Panic of 1893, America regrouped and continued its upward spiral of building the most powerful nation in the world. Making this possible was increased mechanization of industry, a major mark of the Gilded Age's search for cheaper ways to create more products.[12] As machines were designed to do more of the work, a division in labor and wages became more defined between skilled and unskilled workers. Distinctions in labor were reflected in social status. Just as a percentage of the population was becoming wealthy at the top of the financial and social hierarchy, there were paupers at the other end, and several layers in between. Under the golden surface was also an era of poverty as very poor European immigrants poured in on top of African Americans struggling to survive in their new unsupported freedom. It was a nation of contrasts in every area of society: cultures, economics, and politics.

At the top, the nation was gilded by the rich and powerful who built the first sky scraper in Chicago, the ten-story Home Insurance Company in 1885.[13] The Transcontinental Railroad shortened travel from New York to San Francisco from six months to six days. The super wealthy upper crust of Andrew Carnegie, J. P. Morgan, Henry Rogers, John D. Rockefeller, and others were labeled "robber barons" because

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12. Richard Timberlake, "Panic of 1893," in *Business Cycles and Depressions: an Encyclopedia,* ed. David Glasner and Thomas F. Cooley (New York: Garland Publishing, 1997), 516–18.

13. Joseph J. Korom, *The American Skyscraper, 1850-1940: A Celebration of Height* (Madison, WI: Branden Books, 2008), 93–94.

their fortunes were obtained at the expense of the working class.[14] Gilded Age historian Jack Betty and other critics of these industrial financiers, fault them for wage exploitation of low wage earners. In direct opposition are supporters of the mega rich who focus on the expansion of America and their large philanthropic legacies.[15] One instance is Andrew Carnegie, corporate steel mogul, donated over 90 percent of his wealth and said that philanthropy was their duty: the "Gospel of Wealth." Private money endowed thousands of colleges, hospitals, museums, academies, schools, opera houses, public libraries, and charities. Another example, John Rockefeller, Standard Oil tycoon, donated over five hundred million dollars to various charities, slightly over half his entire net worth.[16] These were the men in control of the nation: its growth, its politics, its wealth, its poverty, and its violence.

The disparities between cultures, economics, and politics among the lower classes created tensions which were relieved in a manner of outlets. One of these was violence. The foundation of race as the factor of privileged status in America pit neighbor against neighbor in crowded urban housing. It also aggravated worker against worker as some European immigrants were awarded higher status than others. The lowest on the ladder, the Irish, resented being classed with African Americans.[17] As the numbers of immigrants

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14. Howard Zinn, *"Robber Barons and Rebels." A People's History of the United States* (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2005), 253-295.

15. Burton W. Folsom, *The Myth of the Robber Barons: A New Look at the Rise of Big Business in America* (Reston, VA: Young America's Foundation, 1991), 99.

16. Neil Harris, "The Gilded Age Revisited: Boston and the Museum Movement," *American Quarterly* 14, no. 4 (1962): 545–566.

17. Frederick Douglass, *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass,* 1892 (Mineola, NY: Dover Publishers, Reprint 2003), 214.

and black southern migrants increased, so did outbursts of violence.[18] Substandard working conditions and crowded ghettos increased the daily stress of living and the pressure to succeed and achieve the American dream. However, for many it was a dream deferred in the cities and elsewhere.

It was an era of vast change in the American landscape. The western frontier was developing but southern state economies were still recovering from the devastation of the American Civil War (1861-1865). While the South was struggling to remain an agrarian society, the North and West soared to new economic industrial heights. New York City among the Mid-Atlantic States had gained notoriety as the third most important city in the world as a result of American slavery-related commerce. Its ports promoted commercial global trading that surpassed England in cotton trade during slavery, thereby contributing to New York City's economic stability.[19]

Similarly, New England states thrived from multiple slave-related empires: cotton textiles ranging from high thread count to coarse Negro cloth; production of key slavery machinery such as sugar cane presses and cotton gins; shoe factories of every sort including substandard Negro shoes; numerous banks, ship builders, insurance companies, commercial agents, the carriage trade, and more.[20] Advertisements by northern owned companies were abundant in national and regional print listing goods and services, including local agents. The *DeBow Review* was a favorite source of information and ads

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18. *New York Irish American*, "Negro Soldiers," March 7, 1863.

19. Anne Farrow, Joel Lang, and Jenifer Frank, *Complicity: How the North Prolonged, Promoted and Profited from Slavery* (Hartford, CT: Hartford Courant Company, 2005), 5, 18.

20. Ibid., 3-44.

whose slogan was "Commerce is King."[21] In other words, though northern states gradually eliminated slavery, they remained active in the system of slavery. Harriet Beecher Stowe sought to explain their position as "the northern slaveholder traded in men and women whom he never saw, and of whose separations, tears, and miseries he determined never to hear."[22] Earlier in 1852 through her book, *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* she depicted the northerners' preference for all of the benefits and none of the screams, as she raised period awareness about slavery and abolitionism.[23]

To better understand the quandary of house servants, a background of events leading to the Gilded Age is useful. During slavery it was apparent that northerners realized their land was not as conducive to agricultural slavery as it was to commercial slavery. Therefore, the North endorsed the business of slavery in the South while it commenced to build unsoiled profit-making slave-related businesses. Somehow this positioning, as a twist of morals, was deemed justifiable, when it was actually complicity. This well-tuned North/South American slave machine was running smoothly until the South wanted to expand slavery westward. The unceasing passive and aggressive

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21. James DeBow and William Burwell, *DeBow's Review and Industrial Resources, Statistic, Etc.* 26, no. 5 (New Orleans, LA, 1859), accessed September 15, 2014, http://www.worldcat.org/title/ debows-review-and-industrial-resources-statistics-etc/oclc/56697355.

22. Harriet Beecher Stowe, "The Education of Freemen," *The North American Review* 128, no. 271 (June 1879): 94.

23. Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin or Life Among the Lowly, 150th Anniversary ed.* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2002), 153, 409, 483.

opposition of slave bondage was a growing *force de resistance* which could not be ignored.[24]

The pressure of this factor halted the comradery among states resulting in the War Between the States. Northern states such as New York considered seceding because the end of slavery in America threatened its reaping of huge profits and status as the most powerful city in the country, plus its global rank. Seemingly, the country had adopted a new slogan "In Money We Trust" and the jargon of human rights was shadowed in the name of progress. The original motto "In God We Trust" had only applied to Anglo-males, establishing patriarchal bias against women and racial prejudice towards all African Americans. Double standards for human rights waged a course of hypocrisy in the hearts of the ruling majority analogous to a stampede. Bickering over laws to rein such a nation would only curtail certain behaviors. The whole notion of building a nation at any cost is summarized by Mark Twain in 1879: "What is the chief end of man?--to get rich. In what way? --dishonestly if we can; honestly if we must."[25]

The country continued to promote a hypocritical stance of moral compromise for progressive profits which began in slavery, continuing through its gradual abolishment in northern states, the Emancipation Proclamation, and modifications to the United States Constitution between 1865 and 1870. The three Amendments to the Constitution were unsuccessful in enforcement, leaving African Americans living out their freedom under false hopes. The first of these was the 13th Amendment [ratified December 18, 1863]

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24. Junius P. Rodriguez, ed., *Encyclopedia of Slave Resistance and Rebellion,* Vol. 2 (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2007), xxxiv.

25. Mark Twain, "The Revised Catechism," *New York Tribune* (September 27, 1871).

which officially abolished, and continues to prohibit, slavery and with limited exceptions, prohibits involuntary servitude. The second, the 14th Amendment [ratified July 28, 1868] among other provisions, granted citizenship to persons born or naturalized in the United States. This applied to both men and women of all races. The third, the 15th Amendment [ratified March 30, 1870] extended voting rights to males regardless of race, color, or previous servitude.[26] States throughout the country resisted federal civil rights extended to African Americans. Old slave laws were maintained under a new label of Black Codes in the South, and other codified ordinances in other regions.

The loophole in the 13th Amendment "with limited exceptions prohibits involuntary servitude" allowed states to operate a long-term misuse of federal civil rights. Arresting African-American males for "crimes" as innocent as looking at a white person *the wrong way* could be accused as physically threatening; or *laughing out loud* deemed as disturbing the peace. Though they covered a wide range of punishable offenses, the most popular was *vagrancy* to snag unemployed African-American males. The goal was to replace the outlawed chattel slavery with a new penal slavery. The men, as wards of the state, could be leased as cheap labor through penitentiary contracts.[27] To escape the vagrancy doom, black men and women, took whatever unskilled jobs they could find.

Many African Americans took flight out of the South in what could be termed *the first migration*. Black migrants, many on foot, met European immigrants who crossed the

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26. Melvin Urofsky and Paul Finkelman, *A March of Liberty: A Constitutional History of the United States From 1898 to the Present*, vol. II (NY: Oxford Press, 2011), A16-17.

27. W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America, 1860-1880* (New York: The Free Press, 1998), 166-167.

same Atlantic "big wata"[28]of their ancestors. Just as the ocean salt water afforded different experiences for Africans and Europeans, so did the competition in factories, service industry jobs in restaurants and hotels, railroads, and mines, as well as domestic positions. The conscience of the nation was primarily one of economic rights rather than human rights as witnessed by the postwar treatment of women, African Americans, and now kindred European immigrants. The transition to replace massive slave labor utilized a form of indentured servants through tenant farmers and a force of cheap unskilled commercial and residential laborers. Though the practice of mass cheap labor originated in slavery, it grew proportionately with the industrial explosion during the Gilded Age.

It was a time that invited commentary from a variety of disciplines about any and all aspects of America. One observer was writer Samuel Langhorne Clemens (1935-1910) who was thirty-eight when he decided to write about his interpretations of what he witnessed. Though not his first book, *The Gilded Age* was his only coauthored book and first novel with writer, neighbor, and friend Charles Dudley Warner. In 1869, Clemens, a previous Mississippi steamboat pilot, chose a navigation term "Mark Twain" as his pen name, denoting a safe water mark.[29] The pseudonym was a permanent connection to the part of his life living and piloting the river he so loved. Maybe it also meant his reader was in a safe place and could trust what he authored—that as a writer he was truthful, honest, but not hypocritical. His style was satire through humorous and witty storytelling.

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28. George Griffin, "Letter to Clara Clemens," (Mark Twain House Museum Archives, Hartford, CT., 1893).

29. Twain used different pen names before deciding on "'Mark Twain." He signed humorous and imaginative sketches as "Josh" until 1863. Additionally, he used the pen name "Thomas Jefferson Snodgrass" for a series of humorous letters; Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Thomas Jefferson Snodgrass*, Charles Honce and James Bennet, ed. (Chicago: Pascal Covici, 1928).

Throughout his life, he penned his evolving commentary on social injustices in the United States, and later, globally. As an international figure, he is known for his sharp wit gilded with humor to lampoon societal ills of his day. Therefore, he understood, perhaps, better than most, the ornamentation of a period he describes as hypocritical.

When they wrote the book, the term *Gilded Age*, as previously stated, was coined by Twain and Warner in *The Gilded Age: A Tale of Today* (1873).[30] It may be said that this "muckraking" novel not only satirized the era of social ills disguised by thin gold gilding representing the wealth of the times, it also reflected the compromised or abandoned embodiment of character to achieve golden status.[31] The book mirrors accelerated wealth in an expanding hierarchy as the result of enormous and rapid economic growth. Clemens was introduced to high society through the family of coal magnate, Jervis Langdon in upstate New York in 1867. He was enamored by Langdon's daughter, Olivia, whom he married in 1870. A year later, the couple moved to Hartford, CT, a publishing mecca, and settled in the western outskirts of town in Nook Farm where several writers lived. He was now in the same city as his publisher and surrounded by successful people. They were stable financially because of Clemens' earnings from his books and lectures, and his wife's inheritance. Clemens, as a successful writer, was able to rise to the upper class where his wife existed. They lived lavishly in a home they designed with Tiffany embellishments that were supported by a staff of seven servants. However, they were not in the same league as the Carnegies and Rockefellers. Yet, his

30. Though Twain had published short stories and travel books, *The Gilded Age*, was his first novel, written in 1873 and published in 1904, co-authored by writer Charles Dudley Warner, friend and neighbor of Twain in the Nook Farm community of Hartford, CT.

31. Twain and Warner, *The Gilded Age,* v.

humble beginnings allowed him to experience the social extremes, giving him a unique perspective about the life of the *haves* and the *have nots*.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine and analyze, from a historical perspective, the relationship Mark Twain had with his house servants during the height of The Gilded Age when he resided in Hartford, Connecticut between 1871 and 1891. A literary analysis would shift the focus from historical perspective and not offer the trajectory of historical examination. Twain wrote about the social injustices of the period under his pen name, yet he did not write specifically about "masters and servants" as did contemporary Harriet Beecher Stowe. He did comment on his servants and encounters with them. It is because of these documents that the Twain study is possible. More importantly, his was a typical servant-run home and for that reason, it mirrors the times.

Often, one has to glean attitude from his writings and monitor his behavior with his servants as Samuel Clemens, the master, to determine if they correspond with his written word in private and public. Specifically, when Mark Twain, similar to other employers, positioned himself as patriarch of his servants; the question arises as to whether Twain's was a comprehensive and genuine parental attitude and were his actions comparable? Because Twain professed to have insight and judgment on social injustices, was he able to relate and translate them to his own household, or was there a double standard where his writings did not apply to him? Therefore, the question to be answered is "was Mark Twain hypocritical towards his servants?" Attention will be focused on four long-term servants: coachman, Patrick McAleer; lady's maid, Katie Leary; nursery maid,

Rosina Hay; and butler, George Griffin. Particular consideration will be given to Griffin who had more responsibility and a unique relationship with Twain. As an employer, Clemens wrote more in letters and his autobiography about McAleer, Leary, Hay, and Griffin than other servants. However, he wrote most about Griffin, a former slave who is the subject in two-thirds of a manuscript entitled "A Family Sketch."[32]

Twain's position on the foundation of hypocrisy in America, analogous to W.E.B. Du Bois,[33] believed it was rooted in the churches during slavery. For example "Servants obey your masters" was taught from the pulpit, but it was taken out of context and misapplied based on race. The term servant was only applied to Africans and their descendants. Following slavery, domestic servants replaced slaves; however, the treatment of servants was comparable to slaves. Being at the beck and call of employers who were called masters is compounded by the fact that servants were to be neither seen nor heard as they went about their tasks. Though today domestic workers may be more visible in the work place, they still rank in the lower economic rung in the United States.

This study touches on the importance of the shortcomings of the American dream for the millions of unskilled workers during a time when others were progressing in a self-serving society—a time when voices were raised about issues affecting the very social injustices these workers experienced. There were the muffled voices of women, poor, and uneducated Europeans and African Americans. Yet, little remedy was applied

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32. Twain, "A Family Sketch" unpublished manuscript, Mark Twain Papers and Project Archives, (Berkley: University of California, Bancroft Library, 1901 revised 1906), 1-64. Twain, Livy Clemens, and Susy Clemens, *A Family Sketch and Other Private Writings,* Benjamin Griffin, ed (Oakland: University of California Press, 2014), 13-43.

33. W.E.B. Du Bois, *Du Bois on Religion,* Phil Zuckerman, ed. (Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press, 2000), 11; Everett Emerson, *Mark Twain, A Literary Life* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 296.

for their relief. This paper offers the opportunity to interject the Afrocentric perspective. Traditional U.S. history has been written by Anglo males from a Eurocentric view. This restricted lens does not always adequately portray many of the cultures in America. In particular, it incorrectly records past events by omission and distortion on the presence and significance of black Americans. Arthur Marvick warns that in order to provide the best history, historians should strive to base writings on primary sources as sound evidence for knowledge and interpretation, written in a relatable language.[34]

Statement of the Problem

One of the issues is that domestic service in the Gilded Age mirrored the experience of house slaves. They provided the cheapest labor at the low end of the social hierarchy. Among all the industrial growth, the domestic servant industry was unregulated and consisted of the illiterate and basic literate who neither had the time, skill, or financial means to write and publish. Unlike servants in other service industries, such as hotels and restaurants, domestic servants were generally high turnover and unorganized. The house servant had no voice. While there were rising Anglo women's groups and male labor unions, blacks were generally banned from white assemblages. Even educated African Americans met with difficulty getting published and represented by distributors, as well as barred from public record access and other significant primary resources that contained important historical information. Unlike Anglo counterparts, generally the African American, including the black domestic worker, was not privileged to upward mobility with access to the American dream. More than others, they would

34. Arthur Marwick, *The New Nature of History* (Chicago: Lyceum Books, 2001), 22-50.

continue, as in slavery, to supply the country with dead-end, cheap servant labor. Attitudes and perceptions towards blacks continued to be mythically negative, associated with slavery, and passed down to generations. The few African Americans who achieved a portion of this dream are a marked minority.

In March of 1876, William Dean Howells (1837-1920) visited the Clemens family in Hartford and brought his young son, John. This was John's first visit. He was in awe of many things in the house including painted soap. His description of the butler is telling of what he had been taught. The young boy's experience is explained by his father in a letter. "...and the next morning when he found the black-serving-man getting ready for breakfast, he came and woke me. "Better get up, papa. The slave is setting the table."[35] Apparently, it was left uncorrected that Griffin was no longer a slave because there is no reference to it in the letter the boy's father wrote or in a subsequent letter referencing the incident. About a month later (April 26), Sam Clemens writes Dean that "Mrs. Clemens heard a visiting Vermont gentleman quote Johnny's remark about the "slave" getting breakfast ready, last night."[36] This incident, seemingly for amusement, has been repeated by several authors.

One author sanctioned by the Clemens family was Albert Bigelow Paine who became acquainted with Twain about four years before Twain died. Because of his interest in writing a biography, he spent a much time with Twain who admitted to Paine

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35. William Dean Howells, *W. D. Howells, Selected Letters, Volume 2: 1873–1881,* George Arms and Christoph K. Lohmann, ed., Christoph K. Lohmann and Jerry Herron, Textual ed. (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1979), 123.

36. Twain, aka Clemens, "Letter from Samuel Clemens to William Dean Howells, 26 April 1876." Mark Twain Papers and Project Archives, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkley.

"he made no real pretense to accuracy of time, place, or circumstance, seeking, as he said, only to tell a good story," while in later years an ever-vivid imagination and a capricious memory made history difficult...his effort was in the direction of fact."[37] In Paine's biography of Twain published in 1912, two years after Twain's death, the account is different than the original letter written by the boy's father's eye-witness account. Paine sites his sources first in acknowledgements where he credits Howells and others for their contributions. In a Prefatory Note his disclaimer states, in part: "The reader may be assured, where discrepancies occur, that the writer of this memoir has obtained his data from direct and positive sources."[38] A comparison of the two accounts makes the point. In the original letter written one week after the incident, Howells explains that his wife had prepared their son for the visit elevating the Twain mansion to fairy-palace expectations. Then in 1912, the account of the event shifts to either a more complete telling or an "embellishment" of the facts as Aladdin and other Arabian fantasies.

The 1876 original account reads:

> I took John with me, and as his mother had prepared his mind for the splendors of the Twain mansion, he came to everything with the most exalted fairy-palace expectations. He found some red soap in the bathroom. "Why, they've even got their soap painted!" says he; and the next morning when he found the black-serving-man getting ready for breakfast, he came and woke me. "Better get up, papa. The slave is setting the table.[39]

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37. Albert Bigelow Paine, "Letter from William Dean Howells to his Father, 19 March 1876," *Mark Twain: A Biography Four Volumes in Two*, vol. 1 (NY: Harper & Brothers. 1912), Prefatory Note.

38. Ibid.

39. William Dean Howells, *W. D. Howells, Selected Letters, Volume 2: 1873–1881,* 123.

The account in a 1912 biography reads:

> On one of the visits which Howells made to Hartford that year he took his son John, then a small boy, with him. John was about six years old at the time, with his head full of stories of Aladdin, and of other Arabian fancies. On the way over his father said to him: "Now, John, you will see a perfect palace...next morning he woke early... he saw the colored butler, George...setting the breakfast-table. He hurriedly tiptoed back and whispered to his father: "Come quick! The slave is setting the table![40]

There are several possible conclusions. The most likely is that quite innocently, both accounts are one in the same, with the child thinking of George as the genie of the ring who exclaimed, "I am the slave of the ring." Some illustrators of the period, such as Elizabeth MacKinstry depicted one of the genies from the "Utter West" while other artists crafted images from the "Utter East." In this case, the child could have made the association of a tall brown man as a slave. The significance of a book-printed-story could have demanded more detail or clarity than an informal family letter.

The point is that in the initial and subsequent references, of which there were numerous, there is the absence of correction. Maybe it could have read, "I can see how you might think of the man as the genie-slave; but this man is not a slave, he is Mr. Griffin" (or George – or George Griffin – or the household butler – or something – anything but amused silence). It was an opportunity missed: to educate the child, and subsequently, the public as the story has been published in Howells' and Twain's letters, and in several of Twain's biographies. A repetitively favorite story, using George Griffin, a former slave who was attempting to live out his freedom earning an honest salary, was

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40. Paine, *Mark Twain: A Biography*, 573.

used for amusement rather than elevated to a place of respect and dignity. Historically, it should be noted that Twain has been reported as evolving into a humanist as he aged.[41]

One, then, must question sanctioning his inclusion of the un-prefaced "slave" incident at his most mature age. In 1876 when the "slave" incident occurred, Samuel Clemens, the employer and master of the house was forty-one years old, and Griffin had been in his employ for at least a year. To make matters worse, it is possible that Griffin was included in conversation about the joke—for a grand ole laugh—or not! It may have been one of many slavery reminisces for Griffin and conceivably hurtful, and/or evoked feelings of resentment or even anger. This incident and surrounding accounts illustrate either the deliberate ridicule of African Americans or the insensitivity of liberal minded whites to self-correct myths and stereotypes which was still prevalent in the Gilded Age.

It was the white norm to perpetuate such ideas. Additionally, countless African Americans with tremendous potential found themselves stuck in domestic jobs, making the most of it to survive. Perhaps one of Sam Clemens' fascinations with his butler, Griffin, was the fact that Griffin appeared to be such a person. To continue the myths of slavery, African Americans who were perceived to surpass the stereotypes were often referred to as "exceptional" or "a credit to their race." Usually, this could be translated to mean a black person was intelligent, well spoken, and any other white "civilized" traits that were of desirable character. Character, unlike personality, was critical in the mutual relationship of masters and servants, and between Samuel Clemens and his domestic staff. While records of servants indicate only one black male was hired by the Clemens

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41. Tom Quirk, *Mark Twain and Human Nature* (Columbia, MO: University of MO Press, 2007), 12.

family, he was fair of skin, a comfortable and acceptable white substitute. The other African-American servants hired were a few black cooks because Clemens preferred southern cooking, the cuisine of his youth.

Significance of the Problem

The significance of Twain's perceived hypocrisy towards his servants is that it is symbolic of America's treatment of servants. While the injustices imposed on servants in this study is primarily a social history, the multi-faceted reference to class, gender and race bridges cross disciplines of social, economic, and political histories. In order to reflect on the American symbolism through Twain and his servants, this descriptive work yields insight into the culture by examining interactions within Twain's home. The research balances these social connections with his attitudes as recorded in his pen and those of his inner circle. Using America as a landscape, its historical memory is our narration to inform us of who we are. Establishing Mark Twain symbolically as a figure in American history shows the sort of negotiation that happened in the inner home that narrates our national story.

Twain had a global following and the status of a United States President. Audiences were not only eager to be entertained by his delivery, they wanted to hear what he had to say, and he still matters today. This year, two books were authored about him and *Times Magazine* published a reader on past Twain articles. We often emphasize literary figures in the heroic and analyze their works. This study examines the character of Twain through a critical lens because he represents the ruling majority, then and now. The primary documents of letters and journals are first-hand insights on the inner

thinking and working of a man who is the pinnacled symbolism of the American ideal in action. Therefore, his treatment of servants is revealing of the American hypocrisy towards servants.

This paper is relevant to people who study American history, American culture on class, gender, and race, and Mark Twain. As a developmental ethnography, the standard opinion about servants and other unskilled workers in America needs to be challenged. There remains a contradiction in the Constitutional ideology that has created a tension in this country that needs to be figured out. As in the Gilded Age, this country still struggles with immigration and race issues. Though progress can be documented in improved treatment of the domestic service industry, America can only boast of recent gains through organized and persistent public advocacy. Until 2007, this industry was voiceless and without leadership. The mission of Ai-jen Poo, the Director for the National Domestic Workers Alliance, is to empower and organize domestic workers to fight for better working conditions. The Alliance has brought global awareness and federal legislative change to this group and deserves respect and equality as a viable labor force.[42]

The paradox is that all men in America may be created equal but they are not regarded or treated the same. Black voting rights, Mexican immigrants, and rights of domestics are unresolved issues today that mirror the Gilded Age. The dilemma of who America includes in justice and freedom is still at stake. According to the US Bureau of Labor and Statistics, domestic workers are projected as one of the fastest growing

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42. The National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA) is the nation's leading voice for dignity and fairness for the millions of domestic workers in the United States, most of whom are women.

occupations in America in the twenty-first century.[43] There is no place in our society of 'equals' to continue to project the same hypocrisy in Twain's time of sexism, classism, and exclusionary laws. Our history informs our future, yet we are at a juncture to negotiate equality on the same issues of class, race, and gender now, as in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

While America continued to prove itself worthy of independence from England, it maintained racial bias towards African Americans to maintain a cheap labor force base for nearly four-hundred years. Even though civil rights progress with the election of an African-American President may be respectively considered a tour de force, the truth is that this particular racial group is once again competing state-side for service industry jobs with Hispanic workers, and globally with the shift of American manufacturing and customer service jobs overseas.

Much has changed through the years, along with fashion, travel, and a myriad of other aspects of the American culture. However, the seemingly never-ending quest for cheap, cheaper, cheapest labor continues to drive corporate America. While numerous Americans continue to suffer from these most recent changes in the supply of labor, it appears that the least preferred citizen, still buried under stereotypical myths, regardless of character and personality, education, and skills is first recognized and judged by the color of his and her skin. Historically, in the North, especially "liberal" New Englanders prove to be more conservative towards African Americans in practice than in speech. The Honorable Thirman L. Milner, the first African-American mayor of any New England

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43. US Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Employment Projections 2012-2020," 2-3 & Appendix Tables 6 and 8, accessed 28 July 2014, http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ecopro.pdf.

municipality rural or urban, was not elected until 1981 in Hartford, CT.[44] In that same city, Chief John B. Stewart, Jr. (RET) became the first black fire chief of a major New England city in 1980.[45] Both autobiographies account for breaking some racial barriers, while weathering countless on-going racial battles and ethnic alienation while in office.

Methodology, Literature Review, and Summary

The Gilded Age continued to apply the principles of the American economy established in slavery: profits through exploitation of cheap labor. White men in power seemed determined to prove the independence and worth of a new nation despite the means of achieving their goals. This period signifies a second industrial era and accelerated economic growth in the United States, primarily in the North and western frontier. The monies earned from northern commercial slave industries built economic empires in Mid-Atlantic and New England states. This foundation made it possible to expand the railroads, increasing trade and industry across the country. While part of the country was forging industrial growth, social complexities were fairly unattended. Just as free labor in slavery birthed a nation, cheap labor would sustain it. European immigrants flocked to America, some were attracted by higher American salaries and the dream to prosper, and others were compelled to emigrate from struggling economies and persecutions. In any case, the desire for a better life for themselves and future generations was their hope.

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44. Thirman Miler, *Up From Slavery* (Enumclaw, WA: Pleasant Word Publishing, 2009), 89.

45. John Stewart, Jr., *Hard Climb Up the Ladder* (Charleston, SC: Create Space Publishing, 2013), 259.

European immigrants competed with newly freed African Americans who were generally uneducated and unskilled migrants from southern states devastated by the Civil War. Converging first in northern urban areas, social hierarchy was easily demarcated. Disparity between the extremes was most glaring: paupers on the lowest rung and the new rich pushing their way into the highest level of the upper class. A new middle class was formed by skilled workers, many of whom rose from the lower class of unskilled workers who were one step above indigents. Developed during slavery, "race" as a basis for equality was attached to the influx of cultures, remaining the determining factor for prosperity in a growing nation. Further, the colonial standard of a patriarchal society reigned supreme in all aspects of society and spilled over into paternal attitudes towards house servants.

The treatment of the Gilded Age in this historical context will refrain from literary commentary on the book or other works by Twain. Rather, the emphasis is on the impact of his literary observations and interpretations on social injustices as a historic framework and whether his behavior supported his rhetoric. Similar to Max Weber (1864-1920), a theorist of sociology, Twain wrote about social issues with seriousness, purpose, and commitment.[46] Unlike Weber, Twain used satire, gilded with humor, to reflect human behavior through a storytelling method. Similar in impact, they both reflect the complexities of social categorization within a society. They both contributed a legacy of awareness and insight about inequalities within social strata, how they came to be and the impact over time.

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46. Max Weber, *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York, NY: Routledge Publishing, 2013), xii.

As a theorist, Weber wrote on the broader philosophy while Twain penned specific examples. Possibly the most noted was the exposure of racial inequality through slavery in America with the story of Jim and Huck in the novel, *Huckleberry Finn* (1885). Twain remains current because his topics reflect unresolved social issues that have sustained global interest. His impact can, therefore, be measured by the seemingly timeless relevance to the social imbalance of inequality of class, gender, and race. His writings give voice to topics through stories of people reflecting common global issues. In his day and over time, he achieved the height of international power from dignitaries to the common person. Twain, as a favored son of mankind, appears to satisfy Weber's multiple sources of power because he attained its three components: class power, status power, and political power.[47] Twain used his acquired power to affect human behavior through consciousness of social interactions. While it is difficult to measure changes in human behavior, the on-going centennial dialogue on Twain and his works after his death in 1910 suggests impact on consciousness.

Mark Twain is the pseudonym for Samuel Langhorne Clemens. While his public writings were in his pen name, his household was managed by his birth name as were private letters and journals. Derogatory terms used under his birth name would appear to reflect genuine feelings; however, because he was a satirist, ambivalence may be present as in his penned writings. Elements of character, which were a distinction of the age, will be used as a tool in looking for how he valued servants and his regard for them.

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47. Ibid., 181-187, 194-195.

Ironically, Twain's *The Gilded Age* does not address servants. Further, there were no dedicated essays or other writings on the general role, plight, future, or character of servants. Rather, one has to review the context of his comments on servants and observe Twain's attitudes as reflected in his interactions. Therefore, one reveal of this study is that Twain's (and Clemens') published writings need the support of unpublished documents to clarify his attitudes and interpret his interactions with servants. His personal journals, non-printed manuscripts, letters, and house ledgers are principal interpreters that are then reinforced by letters to and from his wife, friends, relatives, and even a few by Griffin, the butler. This three-tiered approach strengthens the scholarship of this study by utilizing the elaboration of Twain's personal commentary and daily interactions; as well as the observations and interpretations of his inner circle. Both perspectives add a unique advantage to analyzing Twain's published works.

Additional primary sources include US Census documents and Geer's City Directories that substantiate general claims about servants and corroborate statements made by the Clemenses. Ancillary papers from other Nook Farm residents will be utilized comparatively such as Harriet Beecher-Stowe archives including servant-related ephemeral notes. During research visits to Hartford, photographs were taken of the remaining houses in Twain's neighborhood, including his. A contrast of the front doors and the back doors of these homes, which is representative of the master's and servant's place in society and the role of servants in a household, is located in the appendices.

Secondary sources cover a range of general and specific information on servants in America, the Gilded Age, and life in the Nook Farm community. Shmoop's Editorial

Team provides a contemporary retrospective view of the period in "The Gilded Age Summary & Analysis" (2012). Though popular sources that support the uplift of the nation's journey provide worthy background to the period, they generally lend a faint voice to the unskilled servant workers or do not give them voice any voice at all. Rather, they amplify those who already have a platform in politics and business and those who created a voice though labor unions. Among these historians are John and Joseph Buenker, editors of the well-respected massive three-volume encyclopedia, *The Gilded Age and The Progressive Era* (2002), covering the rapid period of change from 1877-1920. Because the editors' focus is more on the Gilded Age leading into the Progressive Era, the essays relating to servants or the plight of the lower class do not give equal voice to this powerless group. Likewise, additional well recognized authors, including Ginger Ray's *The Age of Excess: The United States from 1877 to 1914* (1975) and Judith Clark's *"America's Gilded Age: An Eyewitness History* (1992), fall short of telling the plight of the commercial and domestic worker. These sources contain valuable information on the Gilded Age, yet may appear somewhat shortsighted, not yielding a claimed balance of the period.

A few authors offer insight into the world of immigration from Europe and migration from the American South that focus on the lower working class as the main theme. Jack Beatty is a champion of the low wage earner in *The Age of Betrayal: Triumph and Money in America, 1895 to 1900* (2007). He speaks of the poverty, inequality, and corruption from a perspective that paints a much different picture of the Gilded Age than the typical writings. He warns the reader from the beginning with his

introduction: "This book tells the saddest story: how having redeemed democracy in the Civil War, America betrayed it in the Gilded Age."[48] Beatty leaves others to describe the glamour of this period while he focuses on the effect of those at the top to the opposing grinding poverty, multiracial hatred, corruption and violence that erupted on the job over job preference, labor strikes, and neighborhood streets. His explanation of the gap between rich and poor is more applicable and supports the direction of this essay. History is complex, and though one can read both narratives into this study, the telling of the story from the underbelly of the rich validates the plight of servants.

More specific than an overview of the nation is the Hartford study of Robert E. Pawlowski. "How the Other Half Lived" offers insight on the progression of immigrants and their occupations as unskilled servants in commercial and domestic jobs. While Mark Twain's biography and autobiography speak about his servants to some degree, a book by servant Katie Leary, *A Lifetime with Mark Twain*, gives her perspective on the household inhabitants and visitors. Her book was dictated to Mary Lawton, at the request of Twain's daughter Clara, who was Lawton's friend. One hope's that their friendship in no way compromises the validity of Leary's book. The only known letter written to the family by the butler, Griffin, is transcribed in a book *My Father, Mark Twain*, authored by his daughter Clara.

Generally, the search for contradictory views resulted in zero yield. Research on this topic is either scarce or not easily obtained. Enlightening and supportive data include authors David Roediger, Faye Dudden, and Jacqueline Jones. Roediger's *The Wages of*

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48. Jack Beatty, *The Age of Betrayal*, (NY: Knopf, 2007), xi.

Whiteness, among other contributions, illustrates the use of language by the white working class to separate and distinguish themselves from non-white workers. His emphasis on language not only reaches back to Du Bois's revelations in *Black Reconstruction,* it bridges to more current trends comparable to George Wallace, Governor of Alabama, who modified political racial word usage. Dudden provides insights into the journey of women in the nineteenth century. Though women were gaining status, they were still viewed as keepers of the home. Supporters of the transatlantic connection may cater to the influence of British writer and authority of Isabella Beeton's *The Book of Household Management* as the definitive guide for American housekeeping. However, this book, a compilation of twelve published monthly parts (1859-1861) was based on English aristocracy.[49] It would be more applicable to the mega-rich Americans with holdings equivalent to English estates with servants in the double digits and more formal homes. Undoubtedly it was studied by the upper class such as Clemens' wife, Olivia Langdon, and her family in upstate New York. Beeton's book was reproduced and first published in the United States in 1869.

However, it is likely that more Americans followed the earlier homemaker manual of Catherine Beecher, an American writer who published *Treatise on Domestic Economy* in 1841 with revisions in 1843 and 1856. In 1865, her famous sister and author, Harriett Beecher Stowe, published *Home and Home* in the Atlantic Monthly under a male pseudonym, Christopher Crowfield. Later, in 1869, the same year Beeton was published in the United States, the Beecher sisters collaborated and published *The American*

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49. Isabella M. Beeton, *The Book of Household Management* (London, England: S. O. Beeton, 1861), 961-1057.

Woman's Home: Principles of Domestic Science that was based on both of their previous works. It was the definitive American model home guide with a wide range of subjects known in the nineteenth century as "domestic economy." The guide not only advised what and how to operate a home, it aided the housekeeper in keeping the home environment healthy.[50]

The Clemens household was rather informal by Beeton's standards but more formal than the Beechers' guide. Sam and Livy copartnered in management and operations as husband and wife. The record books were in his hand, yet the female staff, entertainment, and education of the children were clearly under her command.

For the reason of general informality and spousal copartnering, an overview of the American home, somewhere between Beeton and the Beecher sisters, leads to Daniel E. Sutherland's works which appear more applicable based on knowledge of the Clemens home. This study refers to his research and insight in both the *Americans and Their Servants: Domestic Service in the United States from 1800 to 1920* and *The Expansion of Everyday Life, 1860-1876.* Sutherland is inclusive of the working-class domestic servant in a presentation combining history of the Age and emphasizing the servant perspective and role in the American home. He incorporates social and economic history in proposing to describe and clarify the forces shaping the occupation of domestic service and the lives of domestic servants during this target period of the Gilded Age. The focus is the servant problem, from the view of employers and servants.

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50. Catherine Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe, *The American Woman's Home* (New York: J. P. Ford, 1869), 307-334.

In addition to Southerland, Jacqueline Jones' comprehensive overviews of labor history in *A Social History of the Labor Classes* and *American Work: Four Centuries of Black and White Labor* shift the diverse experiences of America's multicultural working class to the front and center of the national historical narrative. She presents the voices and struggles of working people. The historical narration is presented in a manner that validates the work of Ai-Jen-Poo, leader of the National Domestic Worker's Alliance (NDWA), and recent federal legislation of immigration reform, inclusive of domestic workers.

Understanding the Nook Farm Community where Twain lived in Hartford is delivered out of the Harriet Beecher-Stowe archives including servant-related ephemeral notes. Two sources are credited for helping document and understand the genealogical connections and intertwined relationships among the original Nook Farm dwellers: Van Why's *Nook Farm*, and the Stowe Center exhibit "Faces and Places: Harriet Beecher Stowe's Nook Farm Neighborhood." While relying on Mark Twain's own words for his position on servants and servitude, *Americans and their Servants: Domestic Service in the United States from 1800 to 1920* by Daniel Sutherland (1981) yields a foundation for the general understanding of the employer's and servant's positions during the target period of this study. City, state, and federal archival records such as censuses and labor records provide essential quantitative data upon which conclusions were drawn.

In the case of slavery and post-slavery writings on African Americans, Barbara Beeching was the single source attempting to chronicle and assimilate some of this data in her dissertation on family and community in black Hartford. The contrast of secondary

historical sources such as Van Why as a period piece on Twain's community in the late nineteenth century, and Wilkerson's reveal of the Great Migration in the mid-twentieth century demonstrate the continued strife of women, the working class, and African Americans within a system of economic and political corruption.

This corruption continued to force blacks to use back entrances in Jim Crow segregation; whereas in Twain's time, servants, regardless of race, except for the butler, were required to use back entrances to the home. The families for whom they worked avoided back doors at all times. The home owners, their family, and guests used the typically grand front doors and other ornate portals to porches and verandas. Not only were servants required to use the unornate rear entries, they were not to be seen or heard. The exception was the butler whose duties often included greeting guests, serving meals, and male houseguest valet. The division of portals in and out of these residences was as defining as the differences in the societal status with servants being next to the lowest rung of paupers. This level is contrasted with their employers in the expanding upper class, the highest social order of the time. While their employers enjoyed days of leisure, domestic servants typically worked six-and-a-half days a week, leaving only half of Sunday for leisure, and work days began around six in the morning and lasted to about nine each night. The long fifteen hour days left little personal time outside, or even inside of their work-home. This condition would be true for both live-in servants for whom room and board was provided plus salaries, as well as day workers who reported each morning and left at the end of their appointed duties.

Mark Twain and his family lived in a typical upper class home of twenty-five rooms in an exclusive enclave, Nook Farm, in the sprawling western section of Hartford. The ability to hire seven servants afforded him the opportunity to write, socialize, and travel. It allowed his wife, Olivia Clemens, to be relieved of the drudgery of household chores, enjoy her husband's notoriety, and participate in the children's education. Notes, journals, and letters support the amount of leisure time the Clemenses enjoyed as well as the paternal affection towards servants, especially the long-term, devoted staff. The wages, quarters, inclusiveness, and upward mobility of their servants will serve as indicators of Twain's genuineness. In summary, Did Twain's treatment of his employees back up comments like those in a letter to close friend Dean Howells when he wrote "We have the best gang of servants in America, now."[51]

The evidence shows neither Twain nor his elite neighbors did anything to elevate their servants out of a life of servitude while in their employ. There are no records of talks or lectures on uplift. There are no documents indicating either formal or informal classes, inside or outside of the homes, relating to general literacy or specific skills initiated by Twain or his wife. The findings indicate there is no passive or active focus on upward mobility socially, economically, politically, or morally. Twain lived in a society that was self-centered and self-elevating. His was a country that practiced and encouraged hypocrisy towards the "lower sorts" of its constituents. The legal language of America in its US Constitution was contradictory and the interpretation of the foundation vacillated in the Courts and in State Constitutions. At its best, laws of the land were not

51. Twain, "Letter from Clemens to Howells 11 Oct 1876, "Mark Twain Papers and Project Archives, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkley.

representative of how certain races and classes of citizens were treated. The privileged were beneficiaries of all the United States offered, while the less favored either struggled to gain status or not, as in the cases of gender bias against women and racial bias towards African Americans. What then, is the obligation of an employer towards his employees? Based on the standards of his great country, Mark Twain was not hypocritical in matters of his servants.

However, on a larger scale of humanistic consciousness, the scale would weigh heavily towards the opposite conclusion that Twain, especially from a less than modest upbringing, should have been inclined to make a difference in the impoverished lives of his servants. To some degree, while he maintained an objective and critical eye of the country, he perhaps lost sight of his own behavior, becoming "one of them" as he achieved the American dream of riches supported by a staff of house hold servants whose dreams were at best, deferred.

CHAPTER II

SERVITUDE IN AMERICA

> *Who are the oppressors? The few: the king, the capitalist and a handful of other overseers and superintendents. Who are the oppressed? The many: the nations of the earth; the valuable personages; the workers; they that make the bread that the soft-handed and idle eat.*[1]
>
> — Mark Twain, Knights of Labor Speech, 1886

The Basis for American Servitude

Before the American Civil War (1861-1865), the demand for domestic labor in America was primarily supplied by the system of chattel slavery.[2] In the beginnings of U.S. history, slavery was legal in all thirteen British colonies. By the time the War Between the States began, this servitude had existed well beyond the eleven Confederate and four Border States in all areas in the North, excluding Maine.[3] It was even practiced in Indian territories and the U.S. Capital in the District of Columbia.[4] Shamefully, the prewar thirty-four star flag could only boast of eleven Free States where slavery had not

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1. Mark Twain, "Knights of Labor Speech 1886 Pittsburgh, PA," *Collected Tales, Sketches, Speeches, & Essays, 1852-1890* (Washington DC: Library of America, 1992), 883-890.

2. Also known as ACW, the War Between the States, or the Civil War.

3. Eleven Confederate States: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, Tennessee, & Virginia (including West VA until 1862); Four Border States: Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri; Former New England and Mid-Atlantic Slave States: Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

4. Annie Abel, "The Indians in the Civil War," *American Historical Review* 15, no. 2 (January 1910): 281-296.

existed.[5] Excluding territories, this means the American majority had approved slavery, making it legal for a period of time. This high percentage is indicative of the mainstream acceptance of slavery and the foundation of common attitudes towards people of African descent living in America. For centuries, these attitudes would prevail in every aspect of society dictating behaviors of nonblack cultural groups in their interactions and relationships with African Americans.

Although the system of utilizing servants was patterned after European models, the American adaptation was not an exact replica. Hired servants in America were devalued in similar fashion as indentured servants and slaves. The roots of slavery created a basis for understanding hired servants as the labor that replaced slaves. Throughout the states, slaves transported from Africa beginning in 1619 to 1808 were present in homes, on farms, plantations, and manufacturing businesses of various sizes and locations from New England to the Deep South.[6] The return on investments for slaves rapidly increased through breeding. Thus, the estimated five hundred thousand slaves brought to the United States between 1619 and 1808 increased to an enumerated four million on the 1860 Decennial US Federal Census. Revenue was generated throughout the country from enslaved African Americans in four ways. First, huge profits were gleaned directly from the agricultural goods produced during slavery. Second and third, breeding and reselling slaves were lucrative. Fourth, all of the businesses created to support slavery supplying equipment and other necessary supplies were profitable. On the

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5. California, Iowa, Kansas, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Oregon and Wisconsin.

6. Illegal trade continued until 1859.

backs of slaves, old wealth became wealthier, new-found wealth widened the circle of the upper class, and a new middle class was created. The institution of slavery became the most significant economic cornerstone in the development of the American nation.

In contrast to slavery, Free states hired manual and industrial labor. This work force was predominately provided by four groups: free African Americans, European immigrants, Asian immigrants, and Native Americans. The West, because of location, hired Anglo, Asian, and a small percentage of native help. The North hired blacks, whites, and some Natives. These groups supplied various levels of needs in construction, manufacturing and the service industry through unskilled, semi-skilled, skilled and professional workers ranging from ditch diggers and domestic workers, to carpenters and bakers, to architects and physicians, respectively. The white pro-slavery mentality also set unfair societal standards against Native Americans, and certain European groups. The dominant race's view of other races set the standard of inferiority. It impacted human worth and translated into the workplace affecting comprehensive labor practices. Labor historian David R. Roediger developed an original study of the formative years of the American working-class racism. His premise, based on W.E.B. Du Bois' conception of "wages of whiteness" in *Black Reconstruction,* also builds on other Marxist theorists—E. P. Thompson and Herbert Gutman. Du Bois formulates that white workers received their real wages, a psychological wage of privilege, and were rewarded publicly by preference and access.[7] The white working class used race as a platform of white privilege and to pit

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7. W.E.B. Du Bois, "The White Worker," *Black Reconstruction* (NY: The Free Press, 1998), 17-31.

itself against blacks as a tool of separation as a standard of consciousness and identity rather than a materialist conception.[8]

Within the framework of America shifting from an agricultural society to global industrialism, the white working class sought to distinguish itself from blacks to achieve upward mobility while clinging to preindustrial racial notions of superiority. According to Roediger, minstrel shows were one example of exhibiting mockery of blacks and white superiority. The use of words and framing language in these shows reinforced the perception of black inferiority that was displayed in the workplace. White workers put racial distinctions above class, they used language to define it, and to build powerful alliances. Forming a separate work identity from blacks proved beneficial, as with the Irish, who strived to be disassociated from blacks. Du Bois established that between 1800 and 1865 a working class consciousness developed on the basis of race. Roediger argues that this effort to distinguish themselves led to whites' declarations defining themselves as *white* working class and nonslaves. Further evidence of language guiding the white vs. black distinction was that *hireling* became detached from *slave*, *boss* replaced *master*, and *freemen* clumped all blacks (freed and always free) into one category to exclude free blacks from any privilege, previous or ongoing. However, Roediger points out that this racist movement among the working class did not only seek to set whites on a superior course; it sought to discredit the citizenship of blacks. Masterfully weaving blacks into the politics of the Democratic and Republican platforms, blacks previously viewed as non-citizens were now a danger to the country as anticitizens. According to Roediger's

8. David West, *Social Movements in Global Politics* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2013), 41.

study, these changes developed in the 1840s before the War Between the States as more African Americans were being freed and joining the ranks of their freed kinsmen.[9] The practice of superior whiteness that was established in slavery continued to develop as a category of privilege and advantage in US history expanding into grand racism beyond the 1860s.

After the Civil War, the crisis of a destroyed economy in the South had little effect on the upper class northerners who were wealthy before the war or acquired wealth during the war. The Northeast was especially prosperous in a progressive boom called the Second Industrial Revolution (1870-1914), while the Southeast struggled with rebuilding during the period called the First Reconstruction (1865-1877). Although the need for workers decreased in the Southeast, it increased in the northern states, especially in New England. The demand for many skill levels was evident and the requirement for skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled labor was apparent both in factories and the service industry. The growing economy created a need for house servants to support the lifestyle of the enlarged wealthy upper class and its new subordinate middle class who was more similar to French bourgeoisie and English middle class. This proved to be a growth pattern well beyond the Industrial Era (1850-1940) in northern homes.

Rules of housekeeping and codes of conduct were more widely publicized to define roles of house workers for the expanding elite class of employers. One of the symbolic codes was the use of the front door as strictly reserved for principal family members and their guests. This distinction of passages was not limited to exterior portals.

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9. David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness* (Brooklyn, NY: Verso Publishers, 2007), 6-14, 97, 143, 170.

It was inclusive of interior doors, stairs, halls, and rooms designated specifically for domestic workers' use. The separation of space was one of the many rules applicable to the relationship between house employees and their employers. These rules not only represented work-related etiquette, they reflected a growing class distinction in American society. However, unlike Europe's standard system of social classes based on economics, America's class system was polluted using race as its bases.

New found wealth achieved during the war now joined the existing upper echelon of Old Yankee money. Wealth provided options to live in large homes with lavish lifestyles. It also afforded the means to escape the burden of maintaining these homes and servicing that lifestyle. A substantial workforce was necessary to fill the need. This labor force was comprised of an influx of European immigrants who joined the existing unskilled labor force of free and newly-freed African Americans. The labor of maintaining a house was eased by these hired day-workers or live-in servants. Daily chores and upkeep demanded a start before sunrise and an end after sunset. Each day filled with numerous, tedious, and tiring tasks left little, if any, leisure time. Wealthy employers viewed freedom from the drudgeries of housekeeping a necessity rather than a luxury. This translated into an abundance of available time and made it possible to meet social obligations, career goals, educational achievements, and political successes. All of these components contributed to achieving and maintaining upper class status.

There was a direct correlation between the amount of available time created and accumulated wealth. The equation is obvious and elementary: More money equals the ability to buy more free time via hiring an adequate number of laborers. During the height

of this movement (1870-1890), wealthy New Englanders purchased rural farmland and transformed it into sprawling neighborhoods. They were attempting to distance themselves from congested towns and situate themselves in spacious surroundings with same-class neighbors. One such community in Hartford, CT was called Nook Farm. Records indicate the residents employed live-in and/or day-workers. Two of the most well-known Nook Farm inhabitants were authors Harriet Beecher-Stowe and Samuel Langhorne Clemens (aka Mark Twain).

A unique quality among this group of neighbors exceeded the standard "affordability" of hired help. These residents were considered scholars and the majority of them were a mixture of clergy, statesmen, businessmen, and literary notables. Beyond these common characteristics, most were involved in progressive activism on controversial issues including antislavery, women's suffrage, Native American civil rights, and the Chinese Exclusion Bill and Acts. Vehicles used to amplify their voices were as varied as their professions and causes. Sermons were preached from pulpits; passionate speeches from gaveled podiums rang out in political forums; conversations of persuasion ensued in private gentlemen's clubs; platforms for equality were established in ladies' sewing circles; and ink to paper registered powerful thoughts in articles and books. This distinctive sociopolitical action concentrated in one small community invites the opportunity to investigate the relationship of residents with workers in their homes. The information presented examines whether or not Nook Farm residents practiced what they preached in their own homes with their own servants. Class, race, and gender attitudes of the era must be factored into the discussion on the sincerity of a belief system

and the expression of activism by Nook Farm inhabitants. More focus on the African American servant experience is expressed due to the unusual circumstances surrounding their unique journey in America.

From the time America was colonized by Europeans, the cultures and traditions from the founding civilizations were embedded in the society of the new world. From across the Atlantic, patriarchal dominance prevailed in every aspect of the new nation as masters of governance. Men were the owners of policymaking, the workplace, houses of worship, and the home. Conversely, the woman's role was viewed as supportive, less important, devalued, and restricted as "keeper of the home." The division of labor self-excused the man from duties associated with running the home. In essence, housekeeping was women's work, free labor in a manner similar to domestic indentured servitude. While "help" in the form of servants was in existence long before 1607 when America was founded, it took on a different meaning on the western side of the Atlantic.

Interpretations of these political, economic, and social structures on both sides of the Atlantic included examining a society's categorization of people into socioeconomic groups or strata. These were also patriarchal societies where the class system grouped people based upon their occupation, income, wealth, social status, and derived power (social and political). This system of categorizing was defined by Karl Marx as stratification.[10] As such, stratification is the relative social position of persons within a social group, category, geographic region, and social unit. In modern Western societies, social stratification usually is manifested as three social classes: (1) the upper class, (2)

10. Karl Marx: Class is defined by what an individual is able to produce and is therefore the source of social conflict.

the middle class, and (3) the lower class; in turn, each class is subdivided into strata (e.g. the upper-stratum, the middle-stratum, and the lower stratum social status).[11]

A stratified system, regardless of geography or periodization, contains elitism at the higher level and exploitation at the lower. In America, stigma seemed synonymous with the exploitative categorization of the lower stratum, magnifying inherent inequality of class categorizing. The United States also maximized the notion of stigma by using race and gender as a factor. Understandably, resentment and resistance existed among the oppressed groups. Despite resentments of some concerning "ones lot in life" by birth, there was a general understanding about where each person fit into the whole scheme in a system of class which was well defined in daily life, with opportunities for upward advancement.

In America, inconsistency of philosophy, belief, and practice sent mixed messages about the structure to some of the people trying to live within it. Slogans *all for one and one for all* in a society *of the people, for the people, by the people* were applied to the belief that white men of European descent were better than all other men, and all men were privileged over women yielded a deliberate distortion. Not even Weber's subdivision of Marx's theory of stratification could be comfortably applied where attitudes and stereotypes muddied definitions of class, status and party.[12] Prejudices towards persons who did not meet the definition of "white male" were at the heart of conflict in American society. As such, anyone not in the dominating group was subject to

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11. Peter Saunders, *Social Class and Stratification* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 1-2.

12. Marx protégé Max Weber: Class & Status based on income: Class is defined by what a person has access to produce; status refers to prestige due to lifestyle; Party having no economic basis being power/authority based on a hierarchical appointment.

being devalued. Despite the constitutional rhetoric, the longevity of the system of indentured servitude and the enslavement of African people in America had little to show in the way of lessons learned. The working class who emerged from the underbellies of servitude and slavery were not valued in their efforts to earn an honest wage and become a part of the mainstream in American society.

The Widening Divide among Classes

> As the United States transitioned from an agrarian society to an industrialized society, and abolished the slavery of African people in the mid/late 19th century, the nature of domestic work bias was *more* apparent. In some spheres, the unpaid work which was once completed by indentured servants, African slaves and women were being hired as a service which merited the "benefits" of monetary payment.[13]

As labor practice shifted with the influx of more immigrants, due to an unprecedented economic acceleration after the Civil War, the system of class did not improve. The scheme of devaluing was duplicated among races and diverse cultural groups. It manifested in different behaviors. Top down degradation permeated the people. Prejudices established by the dominant race were imitated by other races and stereotyping became a rancid norm throughout the land of democracy. Racial slurs were used as negative definitions of races: coolie (Asian); savage (Native American); nigger (African American); kraut or "sour" kraut (German); dago (Italian); mick (Irish); heeb (Hebrew) and the list continues for every group, coming full circle to slurs for the Anglo American

13. Katie Mark, "Domestic Workers" (master's thesis, Evergreen State College, Olympia, WA, 2002), 10.

such as "honky" or "cracker" in the southern states.[14] Further, humiliation was attached to workers in the lower rungs of the labor market who filled the unskilled manual and servant jobs.

The most severe prejudices of overt discrimination towards African Americans and women increased and amplified in a broken social system that boasted freedom and equality for all. It was the *all* ambiguity that was the basis of a national hypocrisy. Men who resembled the white European male could upgrade in society. They could improve their lot in life in class, status, and party. Women could marry as an only means of uplifting. Remaining were two groups separated from upward mobility: African Americans collectively trapped in a class of their own at the bottom of society; and Native Americans who had been separated by isolation on reservations. Despite the ills of corruption in class and labor practices, the American economy in the West and North kept a rapid growth pace. It was an acceleration that required increasing numbers of workers and adequate service providers to meet the needs of an exploding population.

Americans reached the height of their craving for servants towards the end of Reconstruction in 1877 until the turn of the century. During the heart of the Gilded Age—a term coined by writers Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner in a book, *The Gilded Age: A Tale of Today*—satirized what they believed to be an era of serious social problems hidden by a thin layer of gold.[15] This thin layer of golden upper class would contribute to the vat of social ills by focusing on their own societal acceleration from a

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14. Some races were only tagged with one racial slur while the list applied to the African American was so lengthy it needed to be alphabetized.

15. Shmoop Editorial Team, "The Gilded Age Summary & Analysis," accessed September 22, 2012, http://www.Shmoop.com.

mentality of greed. They were less focused on the collective needs of the lower class majority, many of whom were servants. Although the use of servants had long been incorporated in America, the swell after the Civil War was directly connected to this period of tremendous economic growth in the United States. Most of the growth and prosperity blossomed in the former Union states of the North and West where 98 percent of manufacturing, arms production, and exports were being realized. The South, of the defeated Confederate states, remained economically devastated. Its economy, increasingly tied to cotton and tobacco production, suffered low prices and a reduced workforce. Agriculture, supported by slavery, was its sole focus, unlike the North where there were multiple exports and numerous sources of manufacturing. The whole structure of the South which centered on slavery was now crumbled. The only strong semblance of its core was in the hearts and minds of southern white men and women. Their preoccupation was hard focused on restoring the South as a land of white supremacy and separatism from blacks.

In the aftermath of the Civil War, freed slaves were entering the mainstream grossly unprepared to be competitive in the job market. They were unrehearsed in the mechanics of living independently in America. They had no resources upon which to build a future. Because of the collapsed southern economy, opportunities to survive were grossly limited. Many became engaged in slave-related jobs in tenant farming, or domestic-related services in commercial businesses and private homes. Because of the limited opportunities, a great number simply could make only enough to survive or were unable to find work. Evidence of attempts to leave oppression has been documented

throughout the chronicles of their forced exodus from Africa. It was hardly a surprise when they left the burdened South after the War. From the beginning, before reaching the shores of the New World, blacks resisted oppression in native villages, dungeon ports, and transatlantic voyages. Since this beginning, scores have lost their lives in the struggle for freedom and equality. After reaching the States, brave and creative "blacks tried to escape the South in limited degrees of success from the time the first slaves arrived in Jamestown, VA in 1619. The Underground Railroad spirited hundreds of slaves out of the South as far North as Canada before the Civil War."[16] The desire to escape was still an option during the War. Many courageous runaway slaves joined the Union forces as contraband and worked as civilians and as enlisted soldiers.

Some knowledge was already circulating about a better life "up north" during slavery. More information about life in the North was spread by association with free blacks and the Union Army. Knowledge of particular cities and towns, along with formed relationships of friendly military, gave focus for specific migration destinations. One example is Worcester, MA, a town with an abolitionist history. After ex-slaves came there during the war, Worcester sent missionary teachers to Virginia and North Carolina to educate former slaves.[17] This exchange demonstrated new found strength in military-missionary networks. Contacts made during the war encouraged freed slaves northward where those acquaintances were located, and northern teachers went southward

16. Isabel Wilkerson, *The Warmth of Other Suns* (NY: Random House, 2010), 161.

17. Janet Greenwood, *First Fruits of Freedom* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press), 89.

connecting with black war associates to set up schools.[18] This networking is another example of the push-pull factors and is significant because volumes of blacks came to Hartford from Virginia. Hartford was a city they would have come through on the way to Worcester. Perhaps many reached Hartford and traveled no further. There were also "colored" Union soldiers from Connecticut which could have facilitated networking specific to Hartford. Worcester, like Hartford, had a small community of free blacks before and during the Civil War. Upon arrival to northern cities and towns, freed slaves would have seen others with their same skin color, giving them some sense of kindred community. Additionally, they may have sought the multiracial contacts made through friendly war-time relations. Despite setbacks, African Americans, individually and collectively, proved determined to overcome oppression.

This First Migration (1865-1890) out of the South predated the Great Migration (1915-1960) of the twentieth century by only fifty years. According to the Library of Congress in the 1870s, African Americans began moving North and West in great numbers. In the 1890s, the number of African Americans moving to the Northeast and the Midwest was about double that of the previous decade. "The absolute increase of the black element in the North was 143,767 in the period 1870-1890, and 249,609 in the period 1890-1910."[19] For example, in 1879 roughly six-thousand caught the "Kansas Fever" and ended up in Kansas, Iowa, and Missouri. By virtue of its place in history, it differed from other departures. Though the numbers are significantly less than the Great

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18. Ibid., 104.

19. Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce, *The American Negro: His History and Literature* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1918). Reprinted: Katz, William L., ed., *The Negro Population in the United States, 1790-1915* (New York: Arno Press and the NY Times, 1968), 211.

Migration, this first mass movement out of the South may be considered its predecessor. None of the exoduses were ever easy because racial bias was and continues to be prevalent throughout the United States. In the time of the First Migration, blacks soon discovered prejudice did not stop at the Mason Dixon Line. They learned well and pressed on to overcome the many ways discrimination was visible and invisible. One example in real estate makes the point. *Black-balling* is a term used to describe blocking African Americans from being granted mortgages on the false premise of being unqualified. In turn, home ownership was prevented. By some miracle, if a black was able to directly purchase a home, red-lining controlled where minorities lived. *Red-lining* is a code denoting the geographic areas outlined in red pen that African Americans were permitted to live. More often, indirect land and home purchases were made by sympathetic whites and fair-skinned blacks posing as whites. After the purchase of property for churches and residences, the title would be transferred to the purposed owner. It has been suggested that both practices of red-lining and black-balling have never ended. The idea of co-existing as equals was not limited to real estate.

Generally, white churches in the North did not want "coloreds" to worship as equal Christians.[20] John Jamison Moore (1818-1893), author of "The History of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Zion Church in America," detailed the distinctions between white church leaders/congregants and black members. These differences, based on race were evident in separated seating and limited participation of black congregants

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20. Angela M. Leonard, *Political Poetry as Discourse: Rereading John Greenleaf, Whittier, Ebenezer, and Hip-hop-ology* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2010), 150, 190-191.

and leaders which led to blacks forming their own places of worship.[21] The late Reverend King T. Hayes, fourth pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church, Hartford, CT wrote about the formation of the oldest black churches in that city. His unpublished manuscript, written as a paper at Trinity College, mirrors accounts of founders of Baptist and Methodist black denominations comparable to Richard Allen (A.M.E.) in Philadelphia and James Varick (A.M.E. Zion) in New York City.[22]

Further, for African Americans leaving the South in the First Migration, worship styles of Southern blacks often differed from those formed by black New Englanders before the Civil War. This can be illustrated in Hartford's black church history. Initially, conservative black worship in the African Church in 1823 (later Talcott Church, now Faith Congregational) was a close duplication of its departure from the white Congregational Church. A split in members occurred for three main reasons: differences in class, education, and color. The fairer-skinned and more successful remained at the Congregational Church. This resulted in forming the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church in 1836 (later A.M.E. Zion, now Metropolitan A.M.E. Zion). After the Civil War, migrants from southern states such as Virginia brought different ideologies and established Union Baptist Church (1871), a conservative denomination. Later, Baptist migrants from Georgia spilt from Union to form Shiloh Baptist (1889) for the same

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21. John J. Moore, D.D., *History of the A. M. E. Zion Church in America. Founded in 1796, In the City of New York,* 1st ed. (York, PA: Teachers' Journal Office, 1884; Electronic ed., Academic Affairs Library, UNC-CH University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2000), 15-17, accessed 16 July 2011, http://docsouth.unc.edu/church/moorej/moore.html.

22. Rev. Dr. King T. Hayes, "A Historical Profile of Fifteen Black Churches of Hartford, CT.," (Hartford, CT: Trinity College, 1991), 1-20.

reasons cited between Talcott and A.M.E, plus the desire for more expressive worship.[23]

In essence, African Americans in Hartford, and elsewhere in the North, escaped white oppression and black differences by forming their own churches. However, it was difficult to escape the tight hold on economic advancement. Regardless of upgrading with education or skilled vocations, blacks could not escape the forced repression in the work place. Even college degreed men and women were confined to menial clerk jobs, coal and red ore mines, and domestic and hospitality service industries.

The second or The Great Migration differed from the first in several ways. By the end of World War I (WWI), more blacks had received a basic education and college degrees. There were recruiters in the form of labor scouts/agents sent to the South by companies to entice blacks to come work in factories and other businesses. A dwindling black labor force gave way to southern white opposition attempting to block departures by extreme measures during the Great Migration.[24] Recruiters gave some assurance that actual jobs were available instead of the blind faith required of post-Civil War migrants. Blacks who migrated after the Civil War paved the way along with pre-war freed blacks in establishing small northern communities. Although southern whites gave little or no resistance to blacks leaving after the Civil War, the First Migration may still be considered a harder plight than the Great Migration in terms of "making it" in the North.

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23. Ibid.; Church archives of the four oldest black churches in Hartford: Faith Congregational Church, Metropolitan A.M.E. Zion, Union Baptist Church, and Shiloh Baptist Church. Haines Brown, "Citizens of Color, 1863-1890: Black Society after the Civil War," from the Hartford Black History Project (HBHP) Exhibit, (section on "Black Churches") 6, accessed 18 July 2009, Hartford-hwp.com/ HBHP/ exhibit/05/1.html.

24. Wilkerson, *The Warmth of Other Suns*, 163.

One of the reasons can be attributed to the failure of the United States to bridge the gap between slavery and freedom. Freed slaves were left to "figure it out" and forge their own path. They were now leaving the depressed, former Confederate States as *free* men, women, and children in a society that clearly rejected their presence.

Freed slaves faced numerous dangers in travel living out this new freedom. Albeit there were still dangers and many risks after WWI, they were not as severe as during post-emancipation. In the late 1860s, hope was high but preparedness was low. Only a few slaves were taught marketable trades such as carpentry, blacksmithing, or dressmaking during enslavement. Most were illiterate and unskilled which were devastating scars from slavery, leaving them critically unable to compete for skilled jobs. These drawbacks were coupled with the social constraints of slavery. They had no preparation to merge seamlessly into the mainstream to live out their freedom, nor were they provided adequate mentoring once free. The Freedmen's Bureau was, at best, a meager attempt to aid in the crisis created from the war by assisting former slaves and southern whites.[25] It was unsatisfactory because the Bureau was underfunded causing it to end prematurely. Its failures directly impacted the successes and failures of blacks in adjusting socially and competing for jobs. Inadequacies of this federal program became one of the underlying reasons many braved the migration north. One failure can be sited in the area of education. This is significant because the American system equates education with earning power, which is the catalyst for upward mobility. The Bureau record indicates that during its existence, ninety thousand blacks were educated in basic

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25. The Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands aka Freedman's Bureau, National Archives. "Federal Records and African American History," *Prologue Magazine* 29, no. 2 (Summer 1997): 13.

reading, and perhaps math fundamentals. There were an estimated four million freed slaves. This translates to about 3,910,000 *not* educated or about 98 percent illiterate.[26]

On March 3, 1865, under the direction of President Lincoln, Congress approved one year of funding for the Bureau. This was a US federal government agency operating under the War Department which provided assistance to tens of thousands of freedmen (former slaves) and impoverished whites in the southern states and the District of Columbia. The war had liberated nearly four million slaves and destroyed the southern region's cities, towns, and plantation-based economy. It left former slaves and many Whites dislocated from their homes, facing starvation, and owning only the clothes they wore. The challenge of establishing a new social order, founded on freedom and racial equality, was enormous. The budget and plan to transition freed slaves was as inadequate as support to rebuild the South. A comprehensive budget to rectify the problem completely should have conceivably been more than the cost of the war. Yet, the final resolution reduced the length of recovery and allocated insufficient funds to accomplish either. During a time when the country's financial resources were drained by war, the reason for these cutbacks is debatable.

Union Army General Oliver O. Howard was assigned the position of Director of the Freedmen's Bureau which was operational from 1865 to 1872.[27] The original plans to undertake the relief effort and the unprecedented social reconstruction to aid whites and that would bring freed people to full citizenship failed. It was naïve to expect to

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26. US Bureau of the Census Slave Schedules 1860, US Department of Labor (Washington, DC: Library of Congress).

27. Paul Alan Cimbala and Randall M. Miller, eds., *The Freedmen's Bureau and Reconstruction: Reconsiderations* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1999), 30, 119.

accomplish this in one year. Pleas for extended funding lasted for a few years. For the people the program reached, it issued food and clothing, operated hospitals and temporary camps, helped locate family members, promoted education, helped freedmen legalize marriages, provided employment, supervised labor contracts, provided legal representation, investigated racial confrontations, settled freedmen on abandoned or confiscated lands, and worked with African-American soldiers and sailors and their heirs to secure back pay, bounty payments, and pensions. There were even classes on forgiveness. Although the design was admirable and many people received emergency relief and other services, it simply did not have the reach needed in terms of depth to reach all the people affected or in breath over time to bring the people to the place where they were on equal footing to run the race.

President Lincoln's successor, Andrew Johnson, eschewed funding the program beyond the first year. By 1869, the Bureau had lost most of its funding and as a result had been forced to cut much of its staff.[28] Opposition led to additional underfunding which was very weak by 1870, during this Reconstruction era of the United States. General Howard was temporarily reassigned to assist in a Native American effort. During his absence the Bureau was closed without his knowledge. When he returned, he discovered all records had been permanently removed from his office. Despite appropriation failures and premature program disbandment under the next President, Ulysses S. Grant, blacks were resolute to face the unknown and take their chances in the North.[29] Determination

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28. Ibid., xvi, 29-40, 69, 113.

29. US War Department Archives, Freedmen's Bureau Records 1865-1877.

and perseverance were the driving forces behind their hope to survive and their dream to thrive, though the reality of the country-wide conundrum of racial bias was evident.

Immigrants Compete for Jobs

Information about opportunities in the North and West were not limited to the States. Broadcasts also reached across the Atlantic and attracted millions from Europe. Prior to the Gilded Age, a time commonly referred to as the *Old Immigration*, the first real boom of new arrivals to the United States had been recorded. This first wave of European immigrants often sent money to family still living in their homelands and wrote letters encouraging family members to come to America. These claims of prosperity sent two messages: "I made it" and "You, too, can make it here." During the Gilded Age, approximately ten million immigrants came to the United States in what is known as the second or *New Immigration*. Some of them were skilled or prosperous farmers looking for fresh lands, but most were impoverished peasants looking for the American Dream in mills, mines and factories.[30] Distinctions can be made of the immigrations during this age. The last waves of the "Old Immigration" were from Germany, Britain, Ireland, and Scandinavia."[31] The "New Immigration" was a much poorer group of peasants and rural folk from southern and eastern Europe, including many Italians, Poles, and Jews. Some groups, especially the Italians and Greeks, saw themselves as temporary migrants who planned to return to their home villages with a nest egg of cash earned in long hours of unskilled labor. Others, especially the Jews, had been driven out of Eastern Europe and

30. Thomas Archdeacon, Becoming American: An Ethnic History (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1984), 112-120.

31. Brian Greenberg et al., *Social History of the United States*, vol. 2 (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO), 127–28.

had no intention of returning (The option of Israel did not yet exist).[32] Most of them, like southern blacks, flocked to the northeast.

A comparative study of the immigrating and migrating groups in one of the northern cities of Hartford, CT called "How the Other Half Lived" by Robert Pawlowski and completed in 1973, examines the beginnings of the newcomers' settlement and how each ethnic sector progressed. Unfortunately, newcomers from the British West Indies in the Caribbean, especially Jamaica, are not identified. Logic suggests that all blacks of every origin are one group, though much detail is devoted to distinguishing European sets. While this omission does not affect the outcome of this study, it would have added an interesting dimension. Jamaican presence and participation in the community was well established before the date of the Pawlowski report in 1973. Initially Jamaicans were recruited as seasonal workers but many did not return home and remained in Hartford. They primarily worked in the shaded tobacco fields in Windsor and Bloomfield (Hartford suburbs) where their population was over 20 percent of the residents. They also worked as domestics in private homes. The benefit of the Robert Pawlowski study is that it reveals which segments of European immigrants competed for domestic jobs in America. The contents of the study include German, Irish, Italian, Jewish, Polish, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, French, Greek, Portuguese, Puerto Rican, and black. Note the latter is the only group not listed as a part of its heritage as African American and does not distinguish "black" into subgroups based on origin. References are primarily directed to those of

32. John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 65.

African-American descent through transatlantic slave trade who migrated from southern states in the First Migration.

Germans came to this country as bakers, brewers, barbers, shoemakers, architects, lawyers, and farmers. Women who were educated and bilingual could teach German in schools or in private homes as governesses. The unskilled men worked in typical jobs in hotels and restaurants as dishwashers, janitors, busboys, bellmen, and doormen. The women with no skills worked as cooks and maids in businesses and homes. German Jews had a specific pattern of going into business—first pushing their wares on carts until they had enough money to open an establishment. Clothing, especially the fur trade, was the most profitable of all their other businesses as butchers, grocers, tailors, watch-repairers, boarding house owners, and merchants.[33] They were in the second wave of Jews to arrive after 1848. There is no evidence that Jewish men and women in this wave worked non-skilled labor jobs. "They were better educated, more socially and culturally privileged than the Eastern European Jews that followed them" in the next wave in 1904.[34]

The first wave in 1654 from Spain and Portugal gradually came to Hartford from New York City.[35] No evidence was found to support this group working as servants. For the purposes of this study, it is the Eastern European Jews that arrived in the third wave in 1881-WWI and increased the Jewish population from approximately fifteen hundred 1880 to eighty thousand by 1920. This group included Jews emigrating from Russia,

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33. Robert E. Pawlowski, *How The Other Half Lived* (Hartford, CT: Northwest Catholic High School, 1973), 17-18.

34. Ibid., 57-58.

35. Ibid.

Poland, Rumania, and Hungary.[36] Although a minority may have worked in the service industry, the majority brought with them skills and trades which allowed them to escape domestic servitude. The cultural motto that "every Jew must take care of other Jews" helped uplift those in need of improving their way of life.

Germans and Jews were more sympathetic towards African Americans than any other European immigrant groups. Jewish attitudes may be attributed to similar holocaust and Diaspora experiences. The Germans were more vocal, speaking against negative attitudes towards African Americans and often married into the race. Later, many Jewish Americans supported the African-American populace by participating in different aspects of the U.S. Civil Rights movement. Conversely, the most documented friction towards black America arose from the Irish.

Numerous Irish came to Hartford by way of the Connecticut River from New York and Boston where conditions were overcrowded and unfavorable for housing and employment. Their lack of education as farmers in Ireland seriously hindered their work options.[37] These Irish peasants were the group closest to African Americans in lacking education and skills. They far outnumbered blacks in the North, and eventually used the leverage of quantity as voting power to help them uplift from poverty into higher social classes. They gradually entered politics treating it like a family business hiring family and other Irish. However, initially they were considered at the bottom of American society along with blacks, or barely a step above. This caused extreme friction between Irish and African Americans as the Irish resented the classification. These ill feelings were brought

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36. Ibid.

37. Ibid., 30-31.

into the work place where Irish workers competed for jobs in manual labor and the service industry where blacks had dominated. Often the Irish verbally and physically attacked blacks on and off the job. Frederick Douglass had warned of the coming problems when Irish first arrived and began dominating jobs held by many free African Americans: "the Irishman, in assuming our avocation, has also assumed our degradation."[38]

In addition to being ranked in the lower class, another kind of chafing towards the Irish stemmed from the fact they were settling in Protestant Yankee soil. "Although the Yankee had a low opinion of the Irish as an ethnic group, in many instances the Irish were discriminated against because they were Catholic."[39] The difference was specifically emphasized by the fact that Connecticut was deeply rooted in the Congregational Church which had been long named the official state church. The one strength the Irish had as Catholics was that they were not alone. Italians and Germans, also Roman Catholics would help establish their faith. They all met the same kinds of resistance in a town full of Protestants. Like the Jews, there was no place of worship for Catholics when they arrived. With the Irish, the Italians pushed for the acceptance of and inclusion of Catholicism. Jews focused more on simply building places of worship and schools within their community for the preservation of their culture.

"The first Italians arrived between 1870-1880 during the height of the Gilded Age. Since schooling [in their villages] lasted only four years, there was no emphasis on education. Instead, Italian youths who had fathers with skills, usually learned those same

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38. Frederick Douglass, *Frederick Douglass's Paper* 11, no. 271 (March 4, 1853): 1.

39. Ibid., 31.

skills by age twelve."[40] Girls patterned after their mothers and were trained on domestic tasks in their homes. Restaurants and grocers, who generally started on push carts, were successful in supplying foods native to Italians on the eastside of Hartford where most immigrants *and* migrants lived. The lack of education and skills led men to join the ranks of low-end construction jobs as ditch diggers and hod carriers. Little schooling sent women to compete for the low-end domestic labor along with the Irish and African Americans.

The US Census indicates that French Canadian and Swedish domestic workers were among the least competitive for domestic work in Hartford. The British and Italians were in competition as mentioned, but not nearly as much as the Irish and African Americans. More specifically, it was the young, unmarried Irish females who came to America with the sole purpose to work as a domestic in the home of an American family as a means of progressing into better jobs and getting married. They were generally referred to simply as *Bridgets*. The African Americans, who had been filling service industry jobs as pre-war free and post-war freed in their short-lived emancipation, now felt the shove of primarily Irish and others in this order: British, Italian, German, Canadian, Swedish, and other workers. Both the Irish and the British had the advantage of speaking English taught by English teachers.[41] Other non-speaking immigrants were reduced to positions like ditch digging and scullery. Dialects and foreign accents did abound and were tolerated and often admired. Among the exceptions was the African-

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40. Ibid., 42.

41. Under British rule, Irish was prohibited in National Schools until 1871 and discouraged until 1890 by the Roman Catholics who ran the schools. English was the second and predominant language of the 19th century.

American dialect which was more mimicked in ridicule than admiration.[42] It was evident in books, advertisements, and possibly in casual conversation. This mockery of dialects known as *pidgin*, *creole*, *geechee*, and *gullah* were part of a larger scheme to promote a stereotyped colored race that extended to entertainment, depicted in minstrel shows.

Historians analyze the causes of emigration and immigration in terms of push factors (pushing people out of the homeland) and pull factors (pulling them to America). The push factors included economic dislocation, shortages of land, and anti-race (i.e. anti-Semitism). Pull factors were the economic opportunity of good inexpensive farmland and jobs in factories, mills and mines.[43] One can easily surmise that the same "push-pull factors" were applicable to African Americans migrating within America from southern states to the North. Expressly, in addition to the immigrant push factors of economic dislocation and shortages of land, there was extreme anti-African Americanism expressed in politics, education, religion, economics, and every other aspect of life by exclusion through separatism. Unfortunately, the hatred was not limited to passive acts. Too often it was acted out in violence throughout the Southeast in urban and rural communities, usually without provocation. Consequently, for the southern black, the "need to feel safer" could be added to the standard pull factors of owning land and finding a job.

African-American migrants of the First Migration were competing with already established European First Immigrants as well as the second wave of New Immigrants. This second group had the benefit of the first wave paving the way. Blacks did not have

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42. Rudine S. Bishop, "Reflections on the Development of African American Children's Literature," *Journal of Children's Literature* 38, no. 2 (Fall 2012): 6.

43. Susan Martin, *A Nation of Immigrants* (Boston: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 106.

the same advantage of "paving and mentoring" because they were the first movement of African Americans from the South, and the established population of blacks was sparse in the North. Furthermore, all immigrants had the benefit of American majority-race similarity and preference. In other words, because they were white, they arrived with privilege based on race. They had the advantage of bringing family, culture, and customs with them. Many of them fled horrible conditions but they were not as devastating as the long-term, seemingly never-ending post traumatic experience of slavery. The wounds of which were kept open by the master race by the manner in which they were freed and cast abruptly into a new kind of struggle for survival.

Emigrants and immigrants were not a lost people like the African Americans who were psychologically damaged by the traumas of slavery, stripped of name, family, culture, homeland, and other forms of identity except for gender and physical features.[44] European newcomers journeyed to America by choice. In like fashion, they adapted by altering names and other cultural changes to become more American. Though several groups were ostracized by race or religion, it was mild compared to the treatment of African Americans. Additionally, Europeans had the benefit of quantity. The sheer number of immigrants from the second wave of ten million outnumbered the total freed-slave population of four million by more than double. Beyond the count, immigrants had other advantages: communities already established, race favoritism, in-tact culture and

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44. The distinction between emigrants and immigrants is intentional to separate Europeans who left primarily by causes of the *push factor* through discrimination, starvation, etc. verses the *pull factor* of Europeans who simply left to find opportunities in a new expanding country. "Immigrants" is used in the context of all Europeans relocating to the US, unless used with "emigrants" to denote difference; Robert J. Lifton, *The Protean Self: Human Resilience in an Age of Fragmentation* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 39.

family base, and more skill readiness. In his book, *North of Slavery*, Leon F. Litwack describes the plight of the black worker in northern cities as gradually losing his "place" in society due to the coming of white immigrant groups. He goes on to say, "Irish labor continued to pour into the manual employment, depress wages, and drive out Negro competitors. Ten families employ white servants now where one did twenty years ago."[45]

Despite the plight of individual groups, it was obvious that both black migrants and white emigrants and immigrants were desperate to 'make it' and at some point fierce competition for jobs would be an issue. The competition was for the lowest paid jobs of unskilled workers where much demand was in hotels and private homes. Objectively, it would largely be a question of whether the supply of workers met the increasing demand for jobs. A secondary consideration would be more subjective: the hiring practices based on employer preference. Not only would myths of stereotypes based on prejudice enter the selection process, practical issues like language and culture would impact preferences in hiring domestic workers and those in the hospitality industry.

Gender and Race Biases

The 1870s and 1880s witnessed a larger proportional increase in the number of servants than any other period in American history. By 1870, the ratio of servants to families nationwide was one to eight. The decade of greatest growth was the 1880s, when

45. Leon Litwack, *North of Slavery* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 166.

the number of servants increased by more than four hundred fifty thousand.[46] Even though it was a female dominated labor force, there was a surge in hiring more men than in previous years. The largest numerical increase of male servants, some seventy-three thousand, was an important indication of the need to meet the demand driven by the expanding upper class and the new middle class. Their personal economies afforded them the ability to hire servants, to travel, and to dine out. The job market expanded in both commercial and domestic industries. However, certain positions that could have been filled by men or women were reserved for men. The preference for men in specific jobs and in higher pay for equivalent jobs appears to be rooted in the dominance of a patriarchal society which generally emphasizes more value on the male. The influence of Darwin validated these values by distinguishing character, based on appropriate roles of men and women throughout society:

> It was an age where the impact of the industrial revolution caused a sharp differentiation between the gender roles, especially of the upper and middle classes. Men and women were thought to have completely different natures, owing largely to Darwin's work in biological determinism, and people saw those differences as dictating separate and different functions in society. Men were thought to have natures suited to the public world, women to the private.[47]

Continuing this passage, Kimberly Radek underscores that the traits assigned to each sex were polar opposites. For example, while men were considered powerful, active, worldly, and sexual, women were thought to be weak, passive, domestic, and non-sexual. This thinking was interpreted as men were suitable for the public sphere while women were

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46. Kathleen Gorman, *Silent Spaces: Bringing the Servants Back to Mark Twain's House in Hartford, CT* (Hartford, CT: Trinity College), 19.

47. Kimberly M. Radek, "Women in Literature Class Syllabus: Women in the Nineteenth Century" (Oglesby, IL: Illinois Valley Community College), accessed April 8, 2015 from www2.ivcc.edu/gen2002/syllabus.html.

best contained in the private sphere. Translating this mindset meant women were restricted in the workplace, generally working in positions where they were *not seen* or *rarely discovered,* as opposed to men who could and should be *out front* and *in full view.*

In public jobs the "front of house" positions were wait staff, doormen, drivers, concierge, and bellmen as compared with "back of the house" positions like dish washers or janitors. As such, whether in private or public service, two leading qualities were inherent in job requirements when the male employees would be seen or on display: congenial personalities and perceived good looks (tall, handsome, and in good physical condition). "In the private homes, male servants, commonly known as *flunkies,* became the ultimate status symbol in the Victorian home. More often than females, they fulfilled a social role rather than an economic or productive one."[48]

Women, on the other hand, were kept out of sight in hotels and in most homes. An exception would be the domestic hiring practices of the emerging middle and upper-middle classes who owned smaller homes than the upper class and super rich. The middle classes mostly only hired women. Therefore, the cook would also serve meals and wash dishes. A maid would answer the door, in addition to cleaning tasks. Obviously in these positions, the women would be seen by visitors and vendors. On the lower end of the middle class, chores were shared with the mistress. The use of servants simply helped ease the burden rather than totally remove it, as in the upper classes.[49]

Typically, smaller homes would not have a butler's pantry or separate servant live-in quarters for men, due to space limitations. Men's rooms would be in the carriage

48. Gorman, "Silent Spaces: Bringing the Servants Back," 19.

49. Ibid. 20

Typically, smaller homes would not have a butler's pantry or separate servant live-in quarters for men, due to space limitations. Men's rooms would be in the carriage house on one side opposite the animals and vehicles, or on the second floor if it was two stories. Usually, homes were two stories with a full basement and full attic. Attic space was often referred to as a garret which denotes a small, cramped space beneath the roof, with a low or gabled ceiling. These habitable attic spaces as servants' quarters may or may not be finished, leaving exposed beams, leaky spots, and rough floors. The family living space of about ten rooms would occupy the ground floor and the one above it. The main floor would ordinarily include an entry, parlor, study, dining room, kitchen and pantry. The second floor would have one "bathing room," four bedrooms, and maybe a dressing room or small sitting area. Full basements provided laundry, drying racks and ironing space along with storage. An attic with small gabled rooms and no bathing or toilet facilities would be provided for female help. Often linens would be stored on the third floor. In general, all rooms in these houses were smaller, less architecturally decorative, and void of dedicated rooms for art, music, or conservatories. Frequently, the upper class referred to these homes as "cottages" as compared to their mansions.[50]

Estate homes of the super wealthy would be much larger than middle or upper class residences but are not included in this discussion because they do not apply to the homes in Nook Farm. Comparatively, the average upper class home boasted at least eighteen rooms of family living space with multiple bathrooms spread out over three

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50. Catherine Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe, *The American Woman's Home* (New York: J. P. Ford, 1869), 95-105; Joseph S. Van Why, *Nook Farm* (Hartford, CT: The Stowe-Day Foundation, 1962), 33-37; Daniel Sutherland, *Americans and their Servants: Domestic Service in the United States from 1800 to 1920* (Baton Rouge: LA, Louisiana State Press, 1981), 38-45.

supplement the innovation of boilers for heat. Another feature would be to have more specialty rooms such as a nursery/playroom, dressing rooms adjacent to master and guest bedrooms, classroom, library, conservatory, butler's pantry with liquor closet, scullery, and space for recreation like a billiard room for men. A bonus for servants would be a bathroom with tub and toilet and their own parlor, of sorts. Servants' quarters were small to moderate in size, finished, and furnished with basic items.[51]

A full basement organized for servant work space would include laundry room, wine closet, and herb greenhouse. Storage was equally organized for dry goods, a second ice box, multiple use trunks, as well as other items. Three other features separated the middle class "cottage" from the upper class mansion. The first was a dumb waiter installed from the basement, with stops in the kitchen and often all the way up to the servants' quarters. The second was a call system for summoning servants by specific coded bells or buzzers with a house location indicator. The third feature was a first generation intercom system in place for the convenience of family and guests. Use of the intercom was designated to specific staff like the governess and upper servants, customarily the butler and lead maid. Aside from the house, the size of the grounds and carriage house also separated the middle class from the upper class. Grounds would be larger, more ornate and may include a greenhouse to ensure fresh herbs, and flowers for year round ambiance and entertaining.[52]

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51. Joseph S. Van Why, *Nook Farm* (Hartford, CT: The Stowe-Day Foundation, 1962), 33-37.

52. Ibid.

The carriage house would be three floors. The bottom level would be a storage space for chicken feed, hay, oats and other supplies with an outside door. The ground level would house multiple seasonal vehicles: a carriage and a sleigh for family, plus a utility wagon and perhaps a small sleigh for servant use. The animals, carriage/sleigh horses, milk cow, and chickens would be stalled on the far side opposite the vehicles with wide, double, floor to ceiling doors on the front side. A separate entrance for servants led to the servants' quarters which were often divided by a narrow center staircase just inside the entry. On either side was a kitchen and sitting area. Upstairs, small bedrooms filled the space; however, bathrooms were not necessarily included.[53]

The wealthier the employer and larger the home, the less likely female servants were seen. Conversely, residents hired male servants as status symbols because gender bias in a patriarchy values men over women. Therefore, masters showcased the handsome male servants who strutted about their duties like peacocks when in public view. Indoors, groomed from head to toe, they wore polished boots and black three piece suits, with hands gloved in white for meal service. Outer wear included an overcoat and top hat for coachmen and the same for butlers or other suitable hatting, like a derby. Formal dress was worn for specific entertaining such as parties or dinners. Maids would be allowed to assist in serving large numbers of guests if they did not have the male staff in house or chose not to hire temporary servers. Uniforms were supplied by the employer to ensure the desired image. Coachmen and gardeners would live in quarters over the carriage house. Outdoor male servants wore clothing suitable for their work, including the

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53. Daniel Sutherland, *Americans and their Servants: Domestic Service in the United States from 1800 to 1920* (Baton Rouge: LA, Louisiana State Press, 1981), 38-45.

coachman who fed livestock and maintained family vehicles. In-house servant quarters separated males and females on different floors.[54] In this regard, there was no gender prejudice in housing unlike the hiring practice of predominately women, a carryover from the patriarchal view that keeping house was women's work. Two things that all of the houses had in common were at least one entry door, a back door for servants, and back stairs for servant use.

It could be said that gender partiality was extended to uniforms as a by-product of visibility because female attire was more utilitarian than ornate. A maid wore the long black dress, long white pinafore style apron, white cap, black stockings and black shoes. The exception would be scullery who wore a plain uniform void of any embellishments consisting of black shoes and stockings and grey dress under white apron with white cap.[55]

Gender bias was also reflected in pay. "It was common in the Victorian Era for male servants to earn more than female servants. They were paid for servility; their function was to emphasize the social position of the employers. Male servants received twice the wages of most female servants while doing about half as much work."[56] In 1897, the Labor Department records indicate female wages at $3.23 per week verses the male servant's weekly wages of $7.18. Cooks generally commanded more pay than maids, even lady's maids, but nowhere close to fellow males. They cooked for the staff,

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54. Catherine Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe, *The American Woman's Home* (New York: J. P. Ford, 1869), 95-105.

55. Ibid.

56. Gorman, "Silent Spaces: Bringing the Servants Back," 22.

1897, the Labor Department records indicate female wages at $3.23 per week verses the male servant's weekly wages of $7.18. Cooks generally commanded more pay than maids, even lady's maids, but nowhere close to fellow males. They cooked for the staff, servants, and the family as well as guests. These trends in gender bias were ingrained in the mentality of the growing upper class of the Gilded Age as it mimicked the high societies in England and France.

In this regard, the butler of an estate of the super wealthy would act as an administrator supervising all indoor staff, with a housekeeper under him managing the women. Upper class mansions would still maintain hierarchy but with fewer servants and more direct reporting to the master for the males and to the mistress for the females. In these instances, the butler and housemaid wore multiple hats while the emerging middle class owners co-managed with the butler and/or housemaid.

All servants, whether male or female, "hired into private homes during this time fulfilled at least two roles: they did the tasks that kept the house operating, and they helped satisfy their employers' desire for status."[57] Relieved of household tasks, employers had the time to follow personal pursuits of education, careers, hobbies, travel, philanthropy, social causes, and social mingling. Conversely, servants had little free time daily as their work day usually began before sunrise and ended around nine or ten at night. Typically they worked twelve to sixteen hours a day, six to seven days a week. Regularly scheduled time off varied depending on the needs of each household and the requirements of a servant's job. Standard practice was every other Sunday off, or one

57. Ibid.

weekday evening and Sunday afternoon. In harsh circumstances, there have been reports of no days off. It is understandable that the average female worked in a home 18 months.

Servants who lived in their employer's homes were vulnerable. They knew they had little power and were subject to be let go on a whim. As cumbersome as the arrangement may seem, room and board were provided and the pay was higher than many factory and menial manual jobs. If the master and mistress were kind in their dealings and generous with food and leisure time, it eased the burdens of the position. Further, the paternalistic mentality often enlarged the 'family' circle to include some servants in family leisure activities in the home. On the other hand, since most maids were young single girls, they could be abused at the hand of unscrupulous and immoral masters or extremely puritanical mistresses. Miserly and mean-spirited employers certainly added to an already cumbersome experience. For example, some employers forbade servants to make eye contact or speak to employers in the first person. Such familiarity was considered too informal and weakened the employer's position of authority. Often, such strict guidelines included the "no touch" rule which applied only to African Americans, who were often required to wear gloves on the off chance that direct contact occurred. The relevance of this background information on America and her servants lays the foundation for understanding attitudes and response of white Hartford residents, and especially the behaviors of Nook Farm occupants as employers, as well as the outlooks and actions of the servants.

CHAPTER III

BACK DOORS AS BLACK DOORS

Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry and narrow-mindedness, and many of our people need it sorely on these accounts.[1] – Mark Twain, 1869

Connecticut History and African Americans

This chapter examines the opportunities available to African Americans living in Hartford, CT during 1870-1880. During a time of tremendous economic growth in the state from slavery-related commercial profits, blacks appeared to benefit the least. An overwhelming majority were employed as unskilled workers in the capacity of domestic live-in and day workers or in the service industry as waiters, porters, janitors, cooks, and other similar jobs. During this period, Connecticut became the richest state, in the wealthiest nation. Its capital city, Hartford, soared economically to the most prosperous city in the United States. Slave and war-related industries built Hartford's economic foundation which was sustained into the new post-war era.[2] The Connecticut River imported and exported goods.[3] Factories including Colt's guns and Smith's saddlery gained global status. Insurance companies thrived on policies for the shipping industry, slavery, commercial, institutional, and residential property, and personal life. Hardly

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1. Mark Twain, *Innocents Abroad*, (Hartford, CT: American Printing, 1869), 650.

2. Charles H. Clark, *The Charter Oak City* (New York: Scribner & Co, 1876), 1-21.

3. Margaret E. Martin, *Merchants and Trade of the Connecticut River Valley: 1750-1820,* (Northhampton, MA: Department of History at Smith College, 1939), 7, 11, 199. "The Connecticut River," accessed 02 March 2011, http://connecticuthistory.org/the-connecticut-river/.

boosterism, this was real wealth, and the pinnacle spotlighted the disparity between wealth and poverty which was commonplace in the urban North. After the American Civil War (1861-1865) through Reconstruction (1865-1876), larger northern cities entered such a period of opulence during the Victorian Era that Mark Twain described the period as *The Gilded Age*.[4] It was a time when primarily New England displayed excessive lavishness as an outward display of wealth through economic status which afforded time for leisure and creativity. It was similar to displays of the antebellum South.

White Americans reached the height of their desire for servants during the peak of the Gilded Age. By 1870, one in every eight households had at least one servant. The 1870s and 1880s witnessed a larger proportional increase in the number of servants than any other period in American history. The decade of greatest growth was the 1880s, when the number of servants increased by more than four hundred twenty-five thousand. This ten-year span also witnessed the largest numerical increase of male servants, some seventy-three thousand, and an important indication of the value of servants as status symbols. Servants hired during this era fulfilled two universal roles: they performed the tasks that kept a house operating, and they helped satisfy their employers' desire for status.[5]

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4. The Victorian Era in Britain influenced America from the time of Queen Victoria's reign in 1837 to her death in 1901. Americanized influence was more in the South during slavery and in New England after Reconstruction.

5. Kathleen Gorman, "Silent Spaces: Bringing the Servants Back" (Hartford, CT: Trinity College, 1995), 19.

The size and appearance of a house announced the social position, aspirations, and "character" of its occupants. Even at the dawn of this "Gilded Age" there began a trend toward larger and finer abodes, resulting in the proliferation of grand millionaire mansions. Sutherland continues by quoting one of these home owners: "We build the houses mainly for the purpose of being looked upon. They are constructed to attract notice and impress the beholder with the idea of the importance of their inhabitants."[6]

In the time of this patriarchal society, women were considered keepers of the house. As such, economic status determined if she, as housekeeper, would physically perform all the tasks or hire servants to relieve her. In the case of gardening, carriage driving, and other chores, the man of the house would also find respite and status in hiring domestic help. These notions of prominence and relief prompted households to hire as many servants as possible. Lower classed households on the social and economic upward climb often could only afford one servant. Probably it would be to help with the most dreaded chore—laundry. The justification for employing servants may have been complex, but the reason was simply to maintain a well-ordered household and a contented family. Servants, by performing the monotonous, disagreeable, and back-breaking chores of the household, allowed families to spend more time enjoying life and the housekeepers to manage their full range of responsibilities.[7] Houses were divided into three distinct sections: public rooms, private rooms, and work rooms. The size of the

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6. Daniel Sutherland, *The Expansion of Everyday Life, 1860-1876* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1989), 28-29.

7. Ibid., 64.

house determined the number and kinds of spaces in each category as well as the number of fireplaces, basements, attics, and servant quarters.

It would seem that African Americans, free and freed, should have been able to find employment in these prospering cities and work their way up the economic ladder, but this was not the case. This study observed the conditions of African Americans and influences that stifled their progress in the wealthiest city in the nation, Hartford, CT, despite how eager or qualified they were. The overwhelming majority seemed doomed to remain in service jobs where they had to use the rear servants' entrances or back doors. Indeed, these could just as well have been called *black doors*. As an example of one household of servants, the Clemenses were viewed as a typical family of the growing elite upper class. Specific attention to one servant, the butler, George Griffin, served as a platform for dialogue on "career" options.

The inquiry into Hartford's servant community revealed that attitudes of racism deeply embedded in Connecticut history played a major role in preventing the acceleration of black literacy and economic, political, and social uplift. A major expression of this prejudice against African Americans was the preference of employers to hire European immigrants in servant jobs. Similar to the South, white society was comfortable with and complacent about the stymied status of African-American citizens in Hartford. A look at Griffin illustrates the coping skills of one man and how he simultaneously found his niche, which was possibly forced upon him, but lost a potential career. His story, while uniquely his, is representative of four million African Americans in the United States between 1870 and 1880. Statistics on blacks during the era have not

been published; therefore, data were gathered from primary sources of city directories and state/federal decennial census records between 1790 and 1900.

In order to better comprehend the plight of the 'colored' servant worker in Hartford during the Gilded Age, information about the mien of negative attitude patterns of white governance towards African Americans is useful. A reading of Connecticut's state history, from its own state and municipal archives, dissolves any notion of this state being the 'promised land' for free or freed blacks. Complicity to slavery has roots during colonialization shortly after becoming the fifth colony in 1635. Insolence towards nonEuropean Americans, specifically Native Americans and African Americans, was forthright and consistent. Before the American Revolutionary War (1775-1783), the colonies were governed by the Magna Carter, which established principles that no one is above the law (not even the King), and that no one can take away certain rights. Apparently, *no one* under then British rule, did not apply to *every one.* "Native Americans had been enslaved following the Pequot War in the 1630s. A 1678 colonial survey of Connecticut, answering questions posed by England, estimates that there were fewer than thirty slaves in Connecticut, with three or four being imported annually from Barbados and sold for £22 each. Two African Americans were known to have been baptized."[8] These statistics are confirmed by accounts of slaves in the early twin state capitals of Hartford in 1639 and New Haven in 1644. Comparable to the South, a

8. Archival Documents and The Public Records of the Colony and of the state of Connecticut, in the Collection of the Connecticut State Library, Hartford, CT.

growing agricultural industry in Connecticut fostered incorporating slavery and its steady expansion.[9]

Though slavery at this time in Connecticut was defined as indentured (verses chattel), the enslaved were restricted on travel outside of town borders (1690); drinking in taverns (1703); prohibited from owning land (1717); had a 9:00 p.m. curfew (1723), and more. Modification of these laws became more restrictive and punitive as the slave population grew, though many were later repealed in 1797. In 1730 Connecticut estimates its population to include 700 Indian and Negro slaves. The African American total population continued to increase in 1749 to 1,000 and 3,019 are enumerated in 1756. While ninety plus percent were undoubtedly slaves, these records do not distinguish between free and enslaved. By 1774, the number had increased to 5,045 with roughly half of all ministers, lawyers, and public officials in Connecticut owning slaves, and a third of all doctors.[10] Though there was an increasing population of free blacks, they were still denied the right to vote in 1818. Gradual emancipation started in 1784 prior to statehood in 1788; however, slavery was not completely abolished until 1848.[11] The gradual reduction in slaves is recorded in milestones six years after freeing began as illustrated in Figure 1.

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9. Connecticut Historical Society, Archival Documents Collection "Slavery and Abolition," Box 2, folder 8.

10. Mattatuck Historical Society, CT Land Records, Archival Documents.

11 *Acts and Laws of the Colony of Connecticut*, 1756, Collection of the Silas Bronson Library, Waterbury, CT, 42.

1790	1800	1810	1820	1830	1840	1848
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
2,759	951	310	97	UK	17	0

UK = unknown

Figure 1. Gradual Reduction of Slavery in Connecticut
(Source: Connecticut State Library Land Records Archives and US Census Records)

Diminishing numbers of slaves and an increasing population of free blacks did not constitute their equality to whites. Blacks were legally free in the state but not the nation; they were still separated socially, politically, educationally, religiously, and economically throughout Connecticut. The standing of nonwhites still regarded in servitude reflected an attitude that prevailed for the decades. Insight into the racial mood from the state's beginning has bearing on the positioning of free and freed black residents even after the Emancipation Proclamation, and the subsequent Constitutional Amendments guaranteeing equality. The disregard for nonwhites was not limited to rural areas or small towns. The perception of blacks as inferior was evident in progressive cities, including Hartford.

African Americans in Hartford, Connecticut

Hartford was not only typical of the American stance towards blacks; its rapid economic growth complicated the social strata by enlarging the rungs. Basic lower, middle, and upper classes quickly expanded. The middle rung was separated into a three-tiered level: *lower* middle class, *emerging* middle and upper-middle classes. The top of the rung boasted the booming wealthy *upper class* and the *super wealthy* minority. All levels were supported by a frightfully increasing lower class. The latter divided into two

classes: the poor and the indigent. Servants were classified only one step above the bottom, ranked as the lower class poor. They were classified under semi and skilled workers who had the potential to upgrade into the various tiers of the middle class.[12]

In addition to blacks already in Hartford, the First Migration from the South during and after Reconstruction brought more unskilled workers into the city. A summary of their presence is illustrated here, based on US Decennial Hartford Census Records. A compilation of these records reveals that Hartford sustained an increasing number of free blacks from 1790; however, their percentage within the population decreased by 1880 (3%) to lower than it was in 1790 (3.47%). Keeping in mind that 1880 was the peak of the Gilded Age, white population increase was 12.73% for a total of 4,808 as compared to 317 blacks. The previous decade in 1870, we see 8,591 whites moving to Hartford equated to 254 blacks.

Of the black population in 1870 and 1880, literacy rates and job categories reflect 85.47% unskilled and semi-skilled workers. In these groups, black servants were classified in the 16.98% of blacks over age twenty who were unable to read and write. This translates to 68.49% of literate African Americans who were employed in the lowest ranking and the lowest paying jobs (see Figures 2 and 3).

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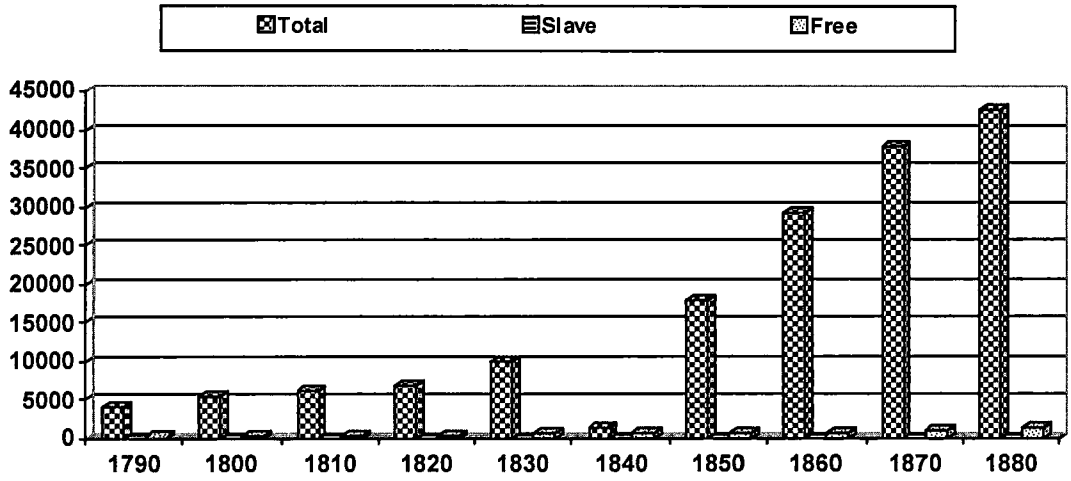
12. Daniel Sutherland, *Americans and Their Servants: Domestic Service in the United States from 1800-1920* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981), 55.



	1790	1800	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850	1860	1870	1880
Total	4,090	5,347	6,003	6,901	9,789	1,279	17,966	29,152	37,743	42,551
Slave	48	18	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Free	94	224	281	352	495	577	615	709	963	1,280

Figure 2. Total Hartford Population Compared to Free and Enslaved African Americans (Source: US Census Records in cooperation with Barbara J. Beeching, Hartford, CT; 1890 Connecticut Census records were destroyed by fire leaving no data for comparison)

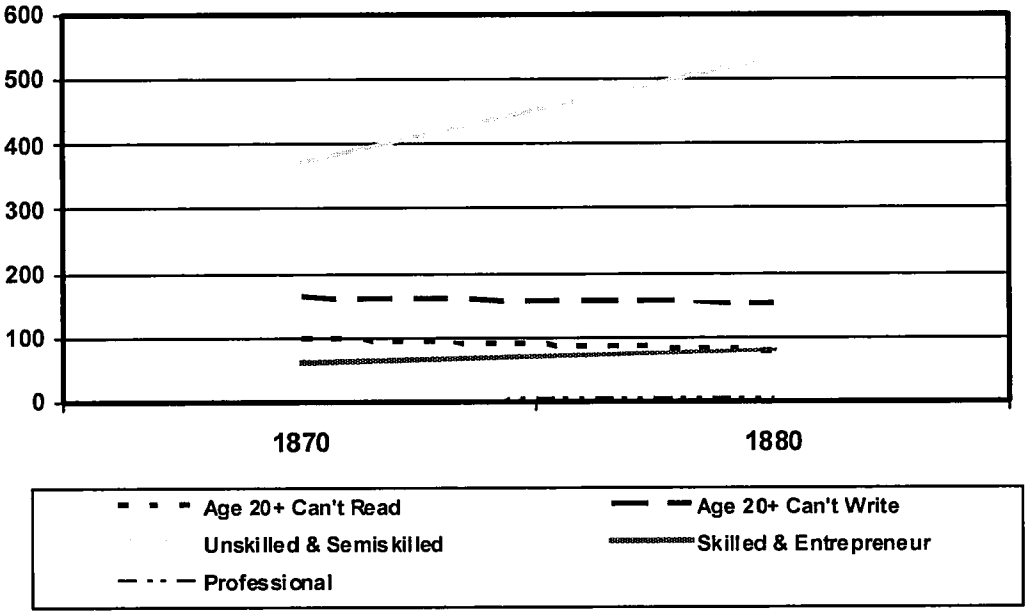


Figure 3. Literacy and Employment of African Americans, Hartford, CT: 1870 to 1880 (Source: US Department of Labor Records and US Census Records)

The largest number of black residents remained Connecticut-native born as reflected in 1870 and 1880 (see Figure 4). Migratory statistics shown, in descending order, indicate the majority from and northern states, other than Connecticut, followed by the South. Virginia leads at 281 with Maryland trailing by less than half at 111, trailed by a small showing from the North.

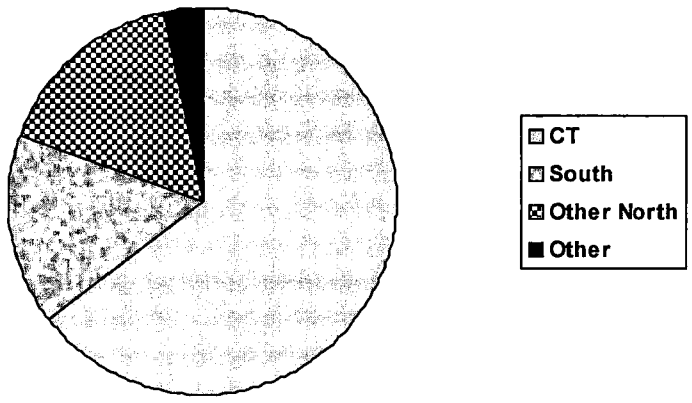


Figure 4. African-American Origins of Birth: Hartford, CT from 1870 to 1880 (Source: Compiled from US Census Records for Hartford City and Town in cooperation with Barbara Beeching)

The largest numbers from northern states were Connecticut (1,256), New York (147), DC (98), and Massachusetts (85); the largest numbers from southern states were Virginia (281), Maryland (111), North Carolina (22), and Louisiana (16). Carolina and Louisiana had 22 and 16, respectively. All of this information, in the context of the times, exposes additional influences on the black working class. Thomas J. Archdeacon comments that the steady increase in the white group reveals the initial European migration before the Civil War, and the subsequent group portion of ten million European immigrants to America during the Gilded Age. Comparable to southern African

Americans, most European immigrants flocked to the northeast.[13] Unlike most immigrants, the black newcomer had to adjust to the muted racism of New Englanders which was subtle and more deceitful than the familiar overt behaviors in the South. A comparative study of the immigrating and migrating groups in Hartford called "How the Other Half Lived" by Robert Pawlowski was completed in 1973. It examines the beginnings of the newcomers' settlement and how each ethnic sector progressed. The benefit of his work is that it reveals which segments of European immigrants competed for domestic jobs in Hartford. The contents of the study include "German, Irish, Italian, Jewish, Polish, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, French, Greek, Portuguese, Puerto Rican, and black."[14] Note, the latter group is not capitalized. Perhaps Pawlowski was unsure of its use as an accepted cultural description. However, he failed to parallel the group as a part of its African heritage. Further, he omitted distinguishing "black" subgroups based on origin, as he did other groups. For example, he specified the immigration of Jews from various locations. In other words, the author distinguishes European immigrants by origin and culture but lumps all African-American, Caribbean, and other blacks as one undifferentiated group. His references are primarily directed to African Americans who migrated from southern states in the First Migration during the Civil War through post Reconstruction. Therefore, his handling of all darker races falls short because he totally omits the consideration of the Yankee free blacks and newcomers from the British West Indies in the Caribbean, especially Jamaica. The most significant immigrant fact in

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13. Thomas J. Archdeacon, *Becoming American: An Ethnic History* (New York: The Free Press, 1984), 112-120.

14. Robert E. Pawlowski, *How the Other Half Lived: An Ethnic History of the Old East Side and South End of Hartford* (Hartford, CT: Northwest Catholic High School, 1973), 13.

relation to black servants is that the Irish came in such competitive numbers that they dominated the industry in Hartford and many other cities.

In addition to the over shadowing of European immigrants in jobs, the general prejudiced attitudes of whites towards blacks, and literacy issues from lack of education available to blacks, there were three other factors impacting black servants. An internal problem among African Americans in Hartford developed that seemed to become an issue in most New England cities. Not only did southern blacks have to adjust to the conservative reserve of whites, they had to adapt to the same in northern-born blacks. African Americans born and reared in Hartford were typically New England conservative. As a result, when the First Migration occurred southern and New England cultures clashed.

With a majority of newcomers from Virginia and Maryland, one of the initial differences was in expressions of worship in Christian denominational churches. The first black church established in Hartford was The African Religion Society (1827). The name reflected a group of blacks from white churches throughout Hartford where the races were segregated and participation was limited. It later became Talcott Congregational in 1819. A division occurred after a decade. More conservative congregants remained who were New England born, fair skinned, and better educated. When southern African Americans pulled away in 1833 to establish the second black church, it was intentionally called the "Colored" Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church to denote two principles. The title distinguished it from white Methodist Episcopal churches and it was a welcome to black persons of all hues and backgrounds. The first black Baptist Church was formed

when a group from Essex County, Virginia came to Hartford and could not comfortably fit into the either Talcott or the Colored ME. Union Church was conservative and eventually it split retaining the educated and more prosperous members. The more primitive Shiloh Baptist (1899) drew membership from the illiterate and less educated working class.[15]

Additional black worship centers were established as the population increased in Catholic, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Pentecostal, Holiness, and Spiritual churches. In 1870-1880, the majority either attended one of the two African-American churches or they continued to worship in segregated seating at white churches. The class system became more defined among the churches based on color, education, and birth place. It had the potential to cause competitive conflicts in the workplace, especially if in the close quarters of domestic service.

Another conflict was gender bias between all men and women servants. The national average ratio was one servant in every eight households, but the average in Hartford was 6.5 servants. The higher percentage in those households was female. On the surface this may not appear to be an issue of concern between one race more than another; however, it was one more weight in the whole of 'stuffs' that blacks had to carry. It could be especially problematic in close quarters working in a home where the Black male, as butler, was in charge of females who worked long hours as maids and cooks, performing back-breaking tasks and getting paid a fraction of his salary. A unique conflict among African-American men and women would also be the conflict of living in

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15. Rev. Dr King T. Hayes, "A Historical Profile of Fifteen Black Churches of Hartford, CT.," (Hartford, CT: Trinity College, 1991), 1-20.

a patriarchal white society when slavery forced the creation of a matriarchal frame. This would be especially confusing emerging from slavery with a plethora of new challenges to manage.

Servant Comparisons

To illustrate a few of the specifics regarding gender and race bias, one affluent family in a neighborhood located in the Hartford outskirts will be used to illustrate these and other relevant and servant topics. Nook Farm, located west of the town in a natural wooded setting, was encircled by the winding Hartford River from the northwest downward curving at the south bend eastward.[16] The whole Asylum community where Nook Farm sat contained sprawling lawns adorning grand houses and mansions equipped with servant quarters. Servant accommodations usually reflected the economic status of the employer as well as the owners' attitudes toward live-in domestic help. Usually, the cramped and insufficiently heated quarters were located in attics, whereas coachmen, hostlers, and gardeners lived in the detached carriage house. Throughout the Gilded Age, hiring male servants carried a higher status symbol than female help. Out front on display, tall, handsome men were dressed in uniform or gentlemen's attire. Porters, waiters, and bellmen would fill jobs in commercial establishments including the fifteen hotels in Hartford. They were primarily coachmen and butlers in domestic service. The hierarchy of home servants was modeled after the English.[17]

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16. Joseph S. Van Why, *Nook Farm* (Hartford, CT: The Stowe-Day Foundation, 1962), 72.

17. Faye E. Dudden, *Serving Women: Household Service in 19th Century America* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1983), 51.

It was standard practice for the woman of the house to hire her personal lady's maid. Few, if any black women would achieve this status. Equally, the role of governess and even nursery maids were reserved for whites. Typically, African-American women were on the lowest rung, working in capacities that did not require interaction with the family or visitors. These would be cooks, scullery, house cleaning maids, and laundresses. An exception might be a seamstress who would interact for clothing fittings and be paid at a higher rate. Black men were hired less than women in domestic service and when they were, it was usually as coachman or groomsman. In commercial service, they were often crowded out of "front of house" positions by immigrants who dominated doormen, bellmen, waiters, porters, and coachmen. In commercial establishments, they were reduced to shoe shiners, janitors, dish washers, window washers, and cooks. The exception would come later in the railroad industry as Pullman *Georges*.[18]

Standard class hierarchy and gender bias against women were reflected in lower wages than male servants, whether in domestic or commercial jobs. Data were retrieved from federal censuses between 1860 and 1900 to access the hiring trends of Hartford's Nook Farm employers. The data revealed they were in keeping with local and national trends. These statistics are for live-in servants only (Table 1). If there were other nationalities working in the homes, they would have been classified as hired help or day workers and not consistently reflected in the census.

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18. African Americans in Hartford between 1790 and 1900: State of Connecticut Census Records. Hartford, CT. 1756, 1762, 1774 and 1776. *Geer's City Directory of Hartford.* The Hartford Printing Co., Hartford. Years: 1855-1900. U.S. Census Records for Hartford, CT. 1790-1900.

Table 1. Cultural Hiring Practices in the United States from 1860 to 1900

	Percent
Ethnicity	
Irish	69%
English	13%
African American	08%
German	04%
French Canadian	02%
Swedish	02%
Gender	
Female	85%
Male	15%
Marital Status	
Single	75%
Married	25%

Of the live-in servants, females were 99% cooks or maids of some description. Scullery maids were usually day workers. Marital status was requested in 1900: 75% were single and 25% married. Name comparisons in the same households where these married men worked listed at least one female cook or maid with the same last name in 99% of the homes. This sampling favorably supports findings in national and local records compiled by the US Census Bureau.

One Nook Farm residence was occupied by Samuel L. Clemens (aka Mark Twain), famous author, humorist, and satirist. His four-story Victorian style mansion of twenty-five rooms was a typical upper-class home which he shared with his wife, three daughters, and an average of seven live-in servants plus hired day help and gardeners. The in-house staff consisted of a head cook, lady's maid, cleaning maids, nursery maid, governess, and butler. The coachman/hostler and animal manager (chickens, cows, and horses), lived in the carriage house with his wife and nine children. Day workers would

consist of assistant cooks, scullery maids, laundress, and gardener. Long hours and back-breaking chores for minimal wages caused a revolving door cycle for maids and cooks who were desperate to get married, become housekeepers, and perhaps own one or more servants. The revolving door of cooks and maids was so much so, that Clemens referred to them in general terms as *Bridgets*. The long-term servants were the coachman, Patrick McAleer (Irish); the lady's maid, Katy Leary (Irish); nurse maid, Rosina Hay (English); governess, Lilly Foote (English); and butler, George Griffin (African American, migrant enslaved in Maryland and Virginia).

Not only was "it common in the Victorian Era for male servants to earn more than female servants, they received twice the wages of most female servants while doing about half as much work."[19] Cooks generally commanded more pay than maids, even a lady's maid, but nowhere close to fellow males, whose wages included servility. They cooked for the servants, the family, and guests, as did the laundresses wash clothes for all in the house. In terms of black servants, Clemens' records indicate, in addition to the long-term butler, Griffin, only two black cooks and one cleaning maid.

A wage analysis of servant pay was made possible by the surviving bookkeeping records of Sam Clemens, and it was also in keeping with the national trend in US Labor records.[20] Salaries do not include value of room and board. According to Clemens' accounting records, maids were paid $150 per year; the cook $200 as compared to the butler at $360 and the coachman at $600 (see Figure 5).

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19. Sutherland, *Americans and Their Servants,* 59.

20. Mark Twain House and Museum Archival Records, Hartford, CT.

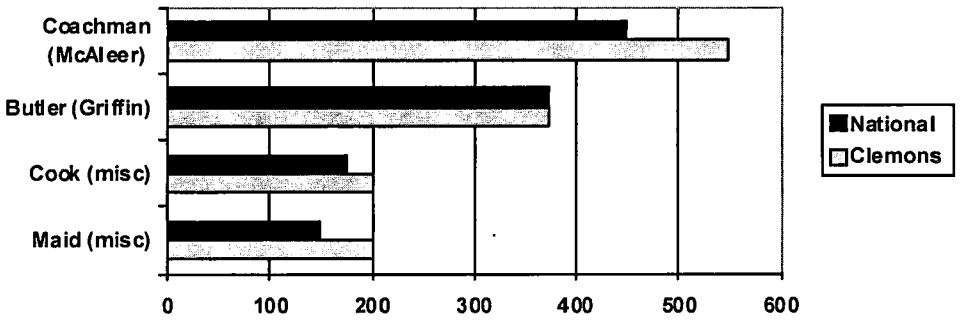

Figure 5. Clemens' Servant Wage Analysis
(Source: U.S. Labor Reports, S. L. Clemens' Ledger Records from the Mark Twain Museum Archives, Hartford, CT)

Of particular interest is the fact that Clemens hired a black man, George Griffin, as butler. It was a position of authority at the top of the live-in domestics, second in charge of the house, following orders and making decisions during the owners' absence. He was the first to greet guests and to serve them casually and informally. This was a high profile family who constantly entertained highbrow guests.

Based on numerous journal entries, letters, and an unpublished manuscript written by Clemens (vs. Twain), Griffin was a regular subject, more so than the other three long-term servants (Katy, Patrick, and Rosina). Griffin was literate, as evidenced in notes and a letter, resourceful, and ambitious. He developed a private banking business as a lender to African Americans in Hartford; he used non-wage earnings as a gambler on horse and political races, as well as boxing. There was no evidence that Clemens tried to assist Griffin in educational or economic uplift, although Clemens noted that Griffin declined to invest in any of his inventions, which incidentally, all failed. Griffin displayed the qualities and skills of a banker—perhaps mortgage lending. Seemingly, light years ahead of his time, banking proved to be one of the most racially segregated industries. It is not

known if Griffin actually tried to become an entrepreneur in finance. At the time, according to the historiography of John Ernest, early accounts reflect clergy being the most educated among blacks.[21] In Hartford and other cities during 1870-1880 and beyond, college educated African Americans were hard pressed to compete against whites who were less qualified, and at best might secure a position as mail clerk or janitor as opposed to secretary or manager. Griffin may have chosen to remain in subservient roles; however, it is unlikely based on his finance project and accounts of his personality by Clemens.

Overcoming Racism

Connecticut was a slave state. In the beginning of this discourse, that may have sounded odd, or even wrong. After all, Connecticut was a leader in the abolitionist movement against slavery and the place where the Constitution was drafted. Still, it should not sound or feel wrong, despite myths about the fairness and equal treatment in the North. Connecticut has a history to confront as much as any southern state. Slavery is slavery wherever it may be. The attitudes towards the enslaved and the free African Americans in the "blue law" state were prejudiced as exemplified through the shift from indentured to chattel slavery. A slavery, which was fortified with punitive laws in concert with national statutes, persisted from at least 1639 to 1848. The embedded sweeping concept of African inferiority continued after Connecticut, and the nation, legally ended slavery. Prejudice, based on race, though muted, was also evident by the treatment of free African Americans who had many imposed restrictions. They were lumped in the same

21. John Ernest, "Liberation Historiography," *Oxford Journals* 14, no. 3 (2002): 413-443.

category as the enslaved. It was a more deceitful racism than in the South, disguised in New England etiquette.

The unwillingness to accept and receive a people based on skin color was most apparent with the influx of European immigrants. Though many were equally illiterate as the Negroes and comparably lacked the same skills, they were preferred in servant jobs over blacks and able to pull themselves up by their boot straps. All criteria being the same, save skin color, the only logical conclusion is prejudiced attitudes towards descendants of Africa. The only exception might be in households where the servants were of the same national origin as the employer. In these cases, the cultural familiarity could be the rationale, especially in meal choice and preparation, and the ease of dialogue. However, as illustrated in Connecticut and US censuses, this was not the standard. Whites simply preferred to pay white servants to attend to their homes. Unlike slavery, when labor was free, blacks seemed to be preferred for the same tasks.

Besides the weighted influence of racism, other exterior factors affecting the stymied progress of African Americans trapped in servant jobs were European immigrant competition, limited education, and for women, gender bias. Ironically, the internal issues mirrored the external, namely gender and color (light skin preferred over dark). Other internal cultural clashes between North and South contributed to complications because blacks were trying to survive daily while forging separate community institutions after being "free and equal," only to find themselves one step higher on society's ladder but forced into servant jobs. Considering the general plight of African Americans of the period, it is more realistic to assume that they, similar to Clemens' butler Griffin, did not

choose to move forward by only one degree. After freedom, Griffin's roles as restaurant waiter and house butler did not differ from the enslaved tasks on a plantation. Perhaps he chose these jobs out of a desire to wait tables and wait families. However, if Griffin, similar to many others was constrained by limited choices in Hartford, CT, then he is representative of the broader issue nationally.

Through time, perhaps many whites' reference was and is based on negative stereotypes as rationale for their attitudes and behaviors towards African descendants. The truth lies in the fact that muted prejudice remains, and the majority of blacks are still stuck in the lower rungs of society in servant-related jobs. The standard comment of comparison of African Americans to European Americans has been "immigrants managed to integrate into mainstream America by pulling up their bootstraps." After this astute observation, a routine question usually follows. Whites asked in the nineteenth century, as they do now, "Why didn't the African Americans do the same as immigrants?" Dr. John Henrik Clarke, noted scholar and political activist, says the answer is simple, "In Africa you took away our boots" [and never gave them back] so how could we do it?"[22] When the boots and straps are recovered, back doors will no longer need to be regarded as Black doors.

22. Dr. John Henrik Clarke, "Black America: The Lonely Nation Away From Home," lecture on February 17, 2013, accessed March 5, 2014, http://www.racetv.com, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E83bllGoob0. .

CHAPTER IV

NOOK FARM, A HARTFORD COMMUNITY

Of all the beautiful towns, it has been my fortune to see, this is the chief. You do not know what beauty is if you have not been here.[1] – Mark Twain, 1868

Residents and Their Servants

One city that many immigrants and migrants sought out was Hartford, CT. Hartford could boast of achievements by many of its residents. Among them was the first dictionary by Noah Webster in 1806 and famous African American, Dartmouth trained daguerreotypist, Augustus Washington.[2] Washington was a part of a small, yet vibrant community of African Americans growing parallel to diverse immigrant neighborhoods. Not only was Hartford becoming the insurance capital of the country, it had become *the* publishing center, housing twelve publishing companies. Factory jobs were plentiful in businesses like Colt's firearms and Smith's saddlery.

In 1876, Charles H. Clark wrote an article in *Scribner's* boasting of the city's status. His news breaking claims that "relatively to the number of its inhabitants, it is the richest city in the United States," spread far and wide. His assertions were based on the abundance of banks and insurance companies that boosted the economy beyond the standard factory, mercantile and agricultural revenue base in other cities. Clark's

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1. William Corbett, *Literary New England: A History and Guide* (Boston: Faber, 1993), 11.

2. Luisanna F. Melis, *Noah Webster and the First American Dictionary* (New York: The Rosen Publishing Group, 2005), 1750, 1808, 1825; Elizabeth Normen, ed., "African American CT Explored," In *Augustus Washington, Portrait of A Young Man*, edited by Nancy Finlay (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan Press, 2013), 174.

conservative estimate of the "assets at two hundred million dollars translated into an excess of $5,000 per inhabitant in a population of an estimated thirty-eight thousand." In today's economy, $5,000 would be equivalent to $100,000 per person per year. In contrast, the standard wages for domestic workers ranged between $150 (female) to $400 (male) per year in the 1870s.[3] By today's standards, those wages equate to $3,000 and $8,000 annually. During this same decade, the house expenditure ledger of one upper class family listed grocery receipts averaging $100 per week as compared to the wages of a lady's maid at $150 per year.

Where the national average ratio was one servant in every eight households, the average was 6.4 servants in Hartford.[4] The 1870 US Decennial Census population chart ranks Hartford as 34th among 100 top growing cities with 37,180 residents enumerated as compared to the number one ranking city of New York City which passed the one million mark. The borough of Manhattan alone tallied 942,292 people.[5] High ranking cities like New York and Boston were more competitive for jobs and living space was over crowded.

A particularly unique upper class community called Nook Farm was located within Hartford on the western boundary, outside of town, in a developing elite area called Asylum Hill (previously Lord's Hill). Nook Farm's origins began when a

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3. US Department of Labor, *The History of Wages in the U.S. from Colonial Times to 1928*, Bulletin No. 499 (Washington DC: US Printing Office, 1934), 134.

4. Mignon Duffy, *Making Care Count: A Century of Gender, Race, and Paid Care Work* (Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers U Press, 2011), 20.

5. US Bureau of the Census, 1870 Decennial Census, Table 10, Population of the 100 Largest Urban Places: 1870, accessed 9 February 2012, http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation twps0027/tab10.txt.

merchant, William H. Imlay sold 140 acres of farmland in 1853 to ease financial troubles. John Hooker (descendant of Connecticut founder, Thomas Hooker) and his brother-in-law and law partner, Francis Gillette bought it and sold parcels to family, friends, and business associates. In this way, Nook Farm became an exclusive neighborhood whose residents were like-minded and close-knit. Formality among neighbors was non-existent unless engaged in a formal affair. Recalling a visit to Hartford, Dean Howells observed, "in the good fellowship of that cordial neighborhood...there was constant running in and out of friendly houses where the lively hosts and guests called one another by their Christian names or nicknames, and no such vain ceremony as knocking or ringing at doors."[6] However, some disagreements regarding doors may have arisen upon occasion. It bothered Harriet Beecher-Stowe when next door neighbor Mark Twain would enter through her back door rather than the front entrance. Usually these homes had one back door for servants and one for deliveries. His front door faced her back door (and one side of Chamberlain's) across a common grassy reserve shared by the three houses.

Twain came from humble beginnings in Missouri and married into Yankee upstate New York wealth. Between his informal nature and his boyish playful gimmicks, it would have been easy for him to use a back door. So boyish was his personality that his wife nicknamed him *Youth*. His somewhat divergent social behavior of doing what pleased him rather than society was also expressed when the door to the servants' quarters was placed facing the main street of Farmington Avenue. Rather than letting the customary standard of an out-of-sight door dictate how their home would sit on the lot, he

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6. William Dean Howells, *My Mark Twain* (New York: Dover, 1997), 17.

and wife Livy[7] made the choice personal. They wanted the views of the river and acreage instead of the street and carriage house. A more practical consideration for heating and cooling was dictated by the east-west rising and setting of the sun.

Not only did it agitate Harriet Beecher-Stowe that Twain crossed a social class rule and lowered himself to the rank of vendors and servants, it is almost certain that many never accepted the public display of the coming and going of his servants. This rule of invisibility was so severe that the Chamberlain house, located adjacent to Stowe, facing Forest Street had a black steel mesh screen installed on the servants' balcony to prevent them from view by passersby. This partition also discouraged unbecoming behaviors like conversations with anyone below on the ground. The Stowe's installed a lattice partition to screen street views of servants on the back porch.

Even so, with all the rules of conduct for servants, less formal conduct was commonplace among residents. Visitors to Nook Farm noted in letters their surprise concerning the extent of casual behavior, observing that Reverend Joseph Twichell, pastor of Asylum Hill Congregational Church, was called "Joe." In private, under some circumstances, a male friend like Twain could be so informal, but to do so in public was outside of standard etiquette. The common use of nicknames and Christian names was symbolic of this unique group. This ease is understandable because of close family and business ties. We gain deeper insights about these neighbors through the writings of Nook Farm historians, Joseph Van Why and Kenneth M. Andrews. Andrews increases our understanding by pointing out not only the "intense literary, social, political, and

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7. "Livy" Twain's nickname for his wife, Olivia Langdon Clemens; "Youth" was the nickname Livy gave to Twain.

business interests of the neighborhood but also their enjoyments and pleasures."[8] They constantly visited and ate meals together and enjoyed entertainment in one another's homes.

Beyond this, there was a contrast of formal and informal mingling throughout the seasons. They frolicked downtown in horse drawn carriages in the summer to the city rink for roller skating, and by horse drawn sleighs in the winter to ice skate on the river. Baseball games in the spring were frequented at the ball park near the Colt factory. Together they attended theatre and concert performances and lectures by diverse groups including stage performances of Uncle Tom's Cabin, Fisk University Jubilee Singers, and notable speakers including Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, and W.E.B. Du Bois. Clubs abounded for all: children, women, and men for separate socializing. Saturday mornings were filled with art and theater projects for children. Ladies' meetings were often entertained by Twain, reading Browning. Literary men met for periodic Monday Evening Club which rotated from house to house while the Friday Evening Club was purely a social gathering in the Clemens' home for his friends, in the cigar smoke filled billiard room on the third floor.

In the midst of all these activities were servants preparing, serving, accompanying, cleaning, and scurrying about throughout the 140 acres of homes. To be exact, there were seventeen homes built on the initial eighteen lots that were bought by Old New England Yankee families and New Money residents. According to Beth Burgess, Curator of the Stowe Center in Hartford, recent survey information indicates

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8. Steve Courtney, *Joseph Hopkins Twichell: The Life and Times of Mark Twain's Closest Friend* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2008), 178.

that Senator Joseph Hawley purchased land but never built on it. It was previously assumed that he did build a house which explains why most records, based on Van Why's work, indicate eighteen lots and eighteen residents. This is cited as a corrective explanation for the attached Appendix A of the Nook Farm map and legend. The legend shows houses in outline built later, after 1900. Since this latter group is outside of the scope of our study (1870-1890), the additional occupants are not included. The focus here is on the original group of home owners who established the Nook neighborhood.

The origin of the name "Nook Farm," chosen by Hooker and Gillette, has a history almost as interesting as its inhabitants. It was actually derived from accounts of the land in two respects. First, there was an old farmhouse on the heavily wooded acreage indicating that at some point it was farm land. Second, the area had been previously known as the "Nook" because of a meander of the Park River that looped through the western section of the land, continued south below Hawthorn Street, and curved east to enclose the wooded tract to its street borders to the north (Farmington Avenue) and east (Sigourney Street).[9] Forest Street ran down the middle of the parcel north to south. Homes were built on either side of Forest and between Hawthorn and the River.[10] (See Appendix A for a map of the neighborhood, Appendix B for the key to the early Nook Farm community-1885, and Appendix C for the remaining homes as of 2015.)[11]

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9. Park River is the Hartford River. It is not a part of the Connecticut River and was called Little River at one time to distinguish the two. Other names include Woods River (used simultaneously with Park River in several land deeds during 1850-1870). It has also been referred to as Hog River due to the 'slop' pots and other refuse emptied into it.

10. Harriet Beecher Stowe Center, archive brochure files.

11. Joseph S. Van Why, *Nook Farm* (Hartford, CT: The Stowe-Day Foundation, 1962), 4.

Nook Farm was in its "heyday" between 1870 and 1900. The focus on this time period places us in overlapping eras in American Society. Each had an impact on the domestic servant's role and life. The Gilded Age (1877-1900) mentioned earlier was nestled in The Victorian Era (1837 to 1901) which refers to the reign of British Queen Victoria. An offshoot of this period and its lifestyle in the United States is referred to as American Victorianism. Although not a true replica, it was a reflection of substantial British influence on the culture, largely in the heavily populated Deep South and New England. The Industrial Era (1850-1940) overlaps with the latter period of the Victorian Era and the era of Reconstruction (1865-1877/1900). Nook Farm reflected the economic growth in Hartford as one of the cities that benefited from the slavery industry, and it reflected the elite Victorian life style of the upper class.

It was also an example of the shift in the class structure in many northeastern cities due to the increase in those obtaining wealth and emerging middle class out of an unprecedented lower class population. Prior to the Civil War, the socioeconomic strata had two layers: the "sub-class" and the "class." The "sub-class," non-citizen sector was composed of Native Americans (so-called savages) and African Americans (purported chattel) enslaved and free. People in the "class" system were considered citizens and categorized in either the upper or the lower class based on prosperity and affluence. Although increasing in numbers, the upper class still retained its elite status as a small percentage of the overall population. The majority of citizens were classified as one lower class group.

After the War, when the lower class category experienced an overwhelming growth due to the four million freed slaves and the influx of immigrants, an expanding lower class began to divide and subdivide creating a middle class. It separated into lower middle, middle, and upper-middle classes as they progressed upward into society. Many former servants were then able to afford servants of their own. With this excess of labor, the upper class, including Nook Farm residents, could be selective in hiring servants. Many could even choose servants from their own heritage with familiarity of cultural customs and traditions. Primary considerations would be language and cuisine. During this time in Hartford, like other growing cities, the supply of unskilled labor for domestic jobs was like a revolving door due to high turnover.

Booming towns like Hartford were attractive because there was not only the probability of finding work and living space, there was a prevailing hope of advancement and achieving the American dream. Hartford attracted a full spectrum of people who arrived by whatever means they could afford. They came by way of the Connecticut River, the railroad, in buggies, on horseback, and on foot. The largest influx of African Americans was from Virginia and Georgia. At the same time, a second wave of European immigrants arrived. They differed from the first wave. They were not only more in number but they were mostly unskilled peasants pouring into Hartford from overcrowded Boston and New York. Their lack of education and skill set aligned them competing for the same level jobs as most blacks. Both groups had inherent problems. Many of the challenges facing freed-slaves have already been mentioned. European immigrants were not without their trials.

In a state where the history was Protestant, Catholic immigrants would find barriers. In the Constitution state of the nation, the Congregational denomination had been established as the State church.[12] The pecking order of "lesser" denominations and non-Protestant religious beliefs would evolve as they were introduced into the Hartford community: Congregational, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, and the remainder lumped in an "other" ranking category—Catholicism, Judaism, etc. Additionally, there was an even greater divide between believers in God and the agnostics and atheists. The progressive history of religious groups in Hartford reflects the differences in population with regard to race, culture, and social class.

A prime example is what occurred in the early Congregational Church at First Church of Christ (now Center Church), located in downtown Hartford. Here, blacks were restricted to balcony seats as a form of segregation which was similar in other churches where only rear standing or seating was allowed for blacks. Some places did not allow blacks inside the sanctuary so they simply stood outside of the sanctuary in the vestibule.[13] Further, in 1865 when Asylum Hill Congregational was built, there is no record that any minorities were included.[14] Most residents of Nook Farm attended this church or another Congregational church. In churches where blacks were allowed to participate, the list of segregated rules extended into the order of worship in ways like

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12. Alice Eicholz, ed., *Red Book: American State, County, and Town Sources*, "CT, Church Records," (3rd ed., Provo, UT: Ancestry Publishers, 2004), 100; Victoria Sherrow, *Connecticut* 2nd ed., (Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish Corp., 2007), 64.

13. Rev. Dr King T. Hayes, "A Historical Profile of Fifteen Black Churches of Hartford, CT.," (Hartford, CT: Trinity College, 1991), 1-20.

14. Lillian Mansfield, *The History of Asylum Hill Congregational Church, Hartford, CT.* (Hartford, CT: Connecticut Printer, Inc., 1965), 60.

being permitted to partake in communion—but last, after everyone else, and refusing to ordain blacks and/or limiting ministerial duties to church janitor and teaching Sunday School only to blacks. Prolonged Christian inequality led black congregants throughout Hartford to leave their places of worship and form their own first black church in 1819, The African Religious Society, where everyone was equal and allowed full participation. Around 1835, a difference in religious views led a portion to leave and form a second church. In order to differentiate themselves, the group that remained was called the Colored Congregational Church and the group that left was the Colored Methodist Church.

The reasons for using the Congregational Church as an example centers on the fact that it was the dominant church and the state church of the very state where the Fundamental Orders of the Constitution were drafted.[15] Therefore, the practices reflect a top down frame of mind from the nation, to the state, to the stayed values of the Hartford community, and in the Nook Farm neighborhood. The fact that blacks were singled out illustrates the prevailing, deep rooted prejudices in addition to social class distinctions.

Asylum Hill Congregational Church was built in 1865 in an elite community within walking distance of the Nook Farm neighborhood. It was conceived as a local church for the convenience of having a place of worship closer to home. Residents could now attend Sunday and mid-week services with ease as well as special concerts and other events. Some members were descendants of the original Plymouth colonists who had

15. CT historian John Fiske's claim that Fundamental Orders of 1638-39 were the first written constitution was upheld by the CT Supreme Court. In 1959 the CT General Assembly designated CT as the Constitution State.

transplanted their religious beliefs and traditions from England to Massachusetts and then to Connecticut and into this specific place of worship.

The Hooker family was a prime example of Congregational heritage and influence in Nook Farm. Previously mentioned Reverend Thomas Booker of Massachusetts was founder of the Connecticut Colony and a Puritan Congregational minister. His family and the Beechers, another family of well-known, long-line ministers, were related through marriage and resided at Nook Farm. John Hooker, lawyer and joint purchaser of the Nook Farm land, married Isabella Beecher, sister of Harriet Beecher-Stowe, famous author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Mrs. Edward Hooker, John's mother, lived next door.

Mary Beecher Perkins (wife of Thomas, lawyer and mentor of John Hooker), the third Beecher sister, lived across the street from Isabella and down the street from Harriet. Harriet married biblical scholar Reverend Calvin Stowe who was dedicated to increasing public education. Calvin's father in upstate New York and son Charles were pastors. John Hooker's sister, Elizabeth, married the other copurchaser of the land, Francis Gillette. Their daughter, also named Elizabeth (Lilly), married George Warner; his brother, Dudley Warner and wife Susan also moved in. A cousin of the Beecher sisters was Harriet W. Foote who married Joseph R. Hawley, law partner of Nook Farm founder, John Hooker. John Hooker's daughter, Mary married Rev. Dr. Nathaniel J. Burton's brother, Eugene.[16]

The Beecher's presence and influence included the world famous preacher and abolitionist, Henry Ward Beecher, founder of Plymouth Congregational Church,

16. Joseph S. Van Why, *Nook Farm* (Hartford, CT: The Stowe-Day Foundation, 1962), 5-10.

Brooklyn, New York, and brother of the Beecher sisters.[17] Another brother, Reverend Thomas K. Beecher of Elmira, New York, officiated at the Clemens' wedding. He often visited their home in Hartford and maintained membership in his church throughout their lives, even though they lived elsewhere and attended church where they lived. He was also the pastor of Mrs. Olivia Langdon Clemens' family in Elmira. Her family's wealth was earned from the lumber, coal and railroad industries. Their abolitionist's views are believed to have greatly influenced Clemens through the years.[18]

Clemens and his wife rented John Hooker's house during an extended absence, while their home was being built. Clemens, an international humorist and author, was close associates of writers and publishers in the neighborhood. He was closest to Charles Dudley Warner, essayist, travel writer, editor of *The Hartford Courant* and coauthor of *The Gilded Age* with Clemens, and William Hooker Gillette (son of Nook cofounder Francis Gillette), actor and playwright. Other published authors besides the two most notables, Stowe and Twain, included Warner and Gillette, just mentioned; John Hooker and his wife, Isabella Beecher; Calvin Stowe, husband of Harriet; Eugene Burton; and the fourth Beecher sister, Catharine who visited her sisters so often she was considered an occasional resident. Catharine, founder of the Hartford Female Seminary was an author of dozens of books and wrote a housekeeper's manual. Later, she and sister Harriet updated it under a revised title, *The Treatise on Domestic Economy and the American Woman's Home*. Joseph Hawley (John Hooker's law partner) was editor of *The Hartford*

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17. "Plymouth Church, Our History," accessed 10 November 2012, plymouthchurch.org/history/article388259.htm?links=1&body=1.

18. Resa Willis, *Mark and Livy: The Love Story of Mark Twain and the Woman Who Almost Tamed Him,* 3rd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2004), 15-16, 52, 74.

Evening Press and recruited his successor, Charles D. Warner when the two papers merged. Eugene Burton (John Hooker's son-in-law) was followed by Warner as editor.[19]

In John Hooker's words, the "curious thread of relationship running through the neighborhood continues." Franklin Chamberlain owned ten acres and sold a parcel to the Clemenses. He built three houses on the remaining land in the Nook: his home (wife Mary Porter), the second home of the Stowe family, and the one next to the Stowe's he sold to his law partner, Ezra Hall. They were attorneys in the Chamberlain-Hall law firm. Charles Fellows (wife Emily) was another attorney and colleague. Charles B. Smith (the saddlery manufacturer) and wife Eliza were also members of Asylum Hill Congregational. Based on family and friends guidelines for forming the cozy nook of a community, no specific family or business relationship was found with the Smiths, nor with a few other residents: William and Matilda Wander, a piano dealer; Mrs. Ellen Case; and a bookkeeper, Walter Cowles (wife Sarah). One fact is certain, for them to live in the community, there was most assuredly some connection, if only they were a part of the upper class hierarchy and perhaps attended the favored Asylum Hill Church.

One of the traditions at the Church was apparently associated with hierarchy. There were two divisions of seating at Asylum Hill consisting of paid and unpaid sections. Members could choose to pay specified sums for annually rented pews. Prime seating was the closest to the pulpit, with a direct view unobstructed from Gothic

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19. Three sources are credited for helping me document and understand the genealogical connections and intertwined relationships among the original Nook Farm dwellers: Van Why. Nook Farm, 8-9; Geer's Hartford Directory, No 75, 1912, 124; Stowe Center exhibit labels: Faces and Places: Harriet Beecher Stowe's Nook Farm Neighborhood.

columns, and absent of nave sermon echoes. Consequently, occupants in these pews paid the highest sum; the farther seats descended towards the rear or sides and were marked by grand columns. Numbered brass plates with the names of designated occupants were secured with brass tacks and corresponded with a framed legend posted on the rear wall of the sanctuary, where it remains as a part of the church history. One of the most recognizable Nook Farm residents, Mark Twain, rented the third pew, center left aisle facing the front. A pew that was only vacant when the pastor, Joseph Twichell was out of town. His faithfulness may have been part society obligation, his wife's insistence, religious curiosity, and being the pastor's "best friend" as noted in Courtney's account of Twichell's life which is based on letters exchanged between them and other proven documentation.[20] This practice of division of seating based on ability or choice to pay, clearly illustrates how deeply the presence of social class was ingrained in Hartford society.

Class and Protestant Congregational traditions existed from the state's colonial beginnings, guided by founder Reverend Thomas Hooker, a Puritan minister from Massachusetts. Connecticut mirrored Massachusetts in Puritanism, providing a great example of the strictness of colonial society. Laws based on scripture, called Blue Laws, were applied to Connecticut residents as a legal symbol of the prevailing Yankee posture. Scripture interpretation was subject to law writers and laws were subject to interpretation by the enforcers of those laws. Traditions can be a source of comfort and may linger beyond their contextual reference. Men of the Asylum Hill congregation only ceased

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20. Courtney, *Joseph Hopkins Twichell: The Life and Times of Mark Twain's Closest Friend* (Athens, GA: University Of Georgia Press, 2008), 122.

wearing formal tails in the late 1970s.[21] The church has a longstanding record of benevolence to the Hartford community and to individuals, but within the confines of their singleness. The finale of tuxedos may have been symbolic of the ending of one era of elitism and the beginning of a new pluralism. Former pastor, Reverend Gary Miller has been credited with widening the minds of the members and, therefore, opening the doors to the community. Today, the diverse congregants and outreach are evidence of change.

Civic-Minded Benevolence

To widen minds suggests they were already open. Indeed credit must be given to the first pastor, Reverend Joseph Twichell who, from the beginning, was open to reaching beyond Protestant faith to Catholics, reaching outside of white society to support the efforts of Yung Wing and the Chinese Mission, as well as church funded efforts to support individuals in the African-American community. Elizabeth "Liz" Petry, *Hartford Courant* journalist, shares how Twichell and his congregation interacted with her African-American family:

> The first connection came with my great-grandfather Willis Samuel James, who worked as a coachman for Marshall Jewell before the latter became Connecticut's governor. Jewell was one of Twichell's parishioners and like Twichell had been a tanner in his youth.
>
> Reverend Twichell's church members aided my family more than once. They helped pay tuition bills for my great-aunts who attended Hampton Institute and pharmacy school. The girls also received clothing from the society ladies of the church. The church donated money for a library that my great-aunt Helen James (later Chisholm) established at the orphanage where she taught in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii. When she returned

21. Lillian Mansfield, *The History of Asylum Hill Congregational Church, Hartford, CT.* (Hartford, CT: Connecticut Printer, Inc., 1965) with corroboration by Church Historian Kathleen Burr for 1965-2010 on 17 Dec 2010.

> to the mainland she addressed the parishioners of Asylum Hill about her experiences there and in Honolulu.[22]

By all accounts, Joseph Twichell seemed to be a kind man of the cloth devoted to his wife, Harmony, his family, his church and church family, his community, and his community family which extended beyond Hartford to the cause of the Chinese and African-American education as illustrated above. Further, Twichell's Civil War chaplain experiences had sensitized his awareness beyond his Protestant Yankee upbringing. It is important to understand Twichell because he was the pastor to almost all of the residents at Nook Farm. His influence in their lives was immeasurable. He was also a neighbor and friend who lived one block north on Woodland.

Like his leadership in the church, members of Twichell's family touched lives in a personal way which had a far reaching impact on education of African Americans. His sister, Sarah Jane, married Edmund Asa Ware. They both became involved and dedicated to the education of African Americans. Jane taught at Hampton Institute in Virginia, and the Storrs School in Atlanta, where she and Edmund met. He had worked under General Howard in the Freedman's Bureau in Georgia and invited Howard to speak at the Storrs School. "The General asked the children present if they had any message for northern children. One boy of about twelve, Richard Wright, whose family had walked two hundred miles to install him in the school, gave a quiet answer that became famous: Tell them we are rising."[23]

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22. Elizabeth Petry, "Family Ties, Part 1," February 19, 2009. Blogger posts as Great-granddaughter of Willis Samuels Jones, coachman, and Hartford Courant reporter, book reviewer, and blogger, accessed October 10, 2012, http://www.lizr128.wordpress.com/2009/02 and /05.

23. Courtney, *Joseph Hawkins Twichell*, 166.

This unassumed statement from a young boy summarizes the heart and mind of every person living in America, inclusive of race, creed, color, religion, and national origin. In post-Civil War times, everyone wanted to rise in some aspect from present circumstances. This was especially true for African Americans. Ware's interest in helping African Americans rise continued. He witnessed the founding of Fisk University in Nashville. He succeeded in getting approval from the Georgia State Legislature to open a university in Atlanta based on the Fisk model. Atlanta University opened its doors and attracted exceptional faculty like its most famous professor, W.E.B. Du Bois who wrote of New England pioneer visionaries: "This was the gift of New England to the freed Negro, not alms, but a friend; not cash, but character....the teachers in these institutions came not to keep the Negroes in their place, but to raise them out of their present places where the filth of slavery had wallowed them."[24] Du Bois' general statement of gratitude appears to acknowledge that the motive of many New England white contributors and teachers was genuine uplift of the Negro, above and beyond mere tokens of money as pauper donations or tax write-offs. Implied here is there were those who included Blacks among Americans deserving of education and willing to take it to task. Just how far reaching this New England mentality would spread was limited in a self-serving gilded society. However, individuals such as those in Nook Farm were financially able and had the time to invest in general education and that of individuals.

Sam and Livy Clemens also had a hand in supporting the education and careers of several people. Influenced by Twichell, the Clemenses held at least one reception at their

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24. W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999), 75.

home on October 26, 1877 for Yung Wing and the mission teachers of the Chinese Mission, an educational mission for one hundred twenty boys located in Hartford. The goal was to help them maintain their culture while being educated in Ivy League and other notable schools.

Clemens helped white sculptor, Karl Gerhardt, *by fully* financing an extended trip to study in *Paris* at the École des Beaux-Arts. It has been reported that Karl's wife, Josephine, was a borderline unscrupulous solicitor for her husband by visiting the homes of the wealthy and luring them to see her husband's work in their home, a nude statue of her. She has also been reported as undermining another artist that Clemens helped. An African-American painter, Ethan Allen Porter, showed great promise. He wanted to study in Paris but could not afford it. Clemens assisted by helping to sell Porter's paintings. It is suspected that Josephine viewed Porter's presence in Paris as a possible threat to her husband's studies. She wrote derogatory letters to Clemens about Porter's character and his work. Porter was experimenting with a new and unpopular artistic expression, impressionism. There was a decline in his ability to sell his work during this period. Josephine's reports of immorality including late hours in clubs where alcohol was served and slanderous accusations about a homosexual lifestyle convinced Clemens to abruptly stop all efforts to support Porter, and he was forced to return to the States where he struggled for most of his life and died a pauper.

A more compelling report of helping African Americans is that Clemens, who had reached world-wide acclaim, was often asked to speak at local black church fundraisers. During one conversation with his wife, we can see the prevailing stereotypes. Clemens

commented to his wife how poorly a letter of invitation was written from a black pastor. He expressed disdain which is understandable as a world class writer. In an effort to help him with compassion, her comment was that Clemens could not hold the minister responsible because he did not know any better. The phrasing is ambiguous. Did he not know better because he was incapable of knowing or because of the lack of education and skill?

He overcame his agitation and supported the church. In other accounts, he told how much he enjoyed Negro spirituals as they were familiar from his childhood. He was reported to entertain in his home by rendering selections of his favorites, and he attended concerts of the Fisk Jubilee Singers stateside and abroad. At one point Clemens reported how successful the response was to readings of Uncle Remus (published in 1881) in the all-white, elite Asylum Hill Congregational Church. Due to this favorable response, he would be sure to be a hit in the "colored" church where he would read the same. There is no recorded response by the church to his reading. The folktales of the fictional Uncle Remus may have been a reminder of what they were trying to leave behind. Conversely, with so little literature kindred to African-American life, it may have been warmly received, at least by a portion of the audience.

Although Clemens paid a portion of the tuition for a black seminary student, he is better known for paying the expenses for a Yale law student. Clemens is generously credited because he actually only paid the board for one semester of the senior year for McGuinn, one of the first black students to attend Yale University Law School.[25]

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25. One interpretation is that 'board' meant all of his expenses, rather than 'room and board.'

Warner T. McGuinn worked his way through college and was working his way through law school. In December 1885, McGuinn and Clemens met when Clemens was to speak at the Kent Club, of which McGuinn was president. They became acquainted when McGuinn met him at the train station and introduced him at the meeting. Initially, Clemens thought he was Irish but learned he was African American during the evening. Impressed by his encounter and discovering McGuinn had to work multiple jobs, Clemens contacted law school dean, Francis Wayland, and offered to pay the remainder of his board, which McGuinn reports as his senior year. The first paragraph of the wording in Clemens' letter dated 24 December 1885 to the Dean seems to be a sincere reveal of his true attitude:

> Dear Sir,
>
> Do you know him? And is he worthy? I do not believe I would cheerfully help a white student who would ask a benevolence of a stranger, but I do not feel so about the other color. We have ground the manhood out of them, & the shame is ours, not theirs; & we should pay for it... .[26]

This encounter and subsequent actions took place the same year that his most famous novel, *Huckleberry Finn*, was published. In this book, the racial slur "nigger" is used 219 times in the social context of the era, as it would have been actually used. A sequel to his first famous book, *Tom Sawyer*, the main character is a boy who does the right thing for a black man when he has the opportunity to do otherwise. It is period satire on the attitudes and behaviors of whites towards blacks. The over use of racial slurs is to be a reflection of how white people continued to think and act after slavery was abolished. It was an effort to highlight "no progress" with the emergence of Jim Crow

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26. Samuel L. Clemens, Letter to Wayland Francis, 24 Dec 1885, Berkley, CA: MTP Archives.

Laws. He spoke through the friend of an already familiar character, Tom Sawyer, another young boy, through the voice of the innocence of youth even when the majority morality of the era was of a different persuasion.

Like most adults, Clemens matured and progressed to become more understanding of people different than him. His writings reveal portions of changes in his attitudes towards women, Chinese, Jews, African Americans, and other groups. This does not mean he overcame all of his prejudices and resolved all stereotypes. Entries in his journals which reveal his private thoughts and when he was able to be himself indicate that negative impressions and habits lingered. Still, according to Dr. Kerry Driscoll,[27] Clemens was not known to fully overcome his extreme negative regard for Native Americans. She states that his deep-seated emotions were ingrained from childhood by his mother until her dying breath because of a massacre on her family early in her life. With regards to her assessment, we look at Clemens' attempt to dispel the images of typical stereotypes in his critiques of J. F. Cooper. In his exaggerations he does effectively demonstrate the misery Native Americans experienced, and emphasized that it was the intrusion by white colonists and how they were treated that lay at the root of problem. Apparently, his mother could resolve her negative emotions to accept the reasons for massacres as a means of solace and letting go. Some emotional scarring is so powerful that it can take many generations to heal. This is the case with the complex scarring of African-American slaves who collectively show many signs of residual

27. Dr. Driscoll is a professor of English at the University of Saint Joseph, Hartford, CT and currently researching Mark Twain's attitudes and actions regarding Native Americans.

trauma. In any case, there may be other situations where Clemens and his wife helped students. These are the accounts that surfaced.

Several of the Nook Farm residents and their families were involved in the education of blacks and were staples in antislavery activism as cited earlier. It is important to make special note of two more. Rev. Henry Ward Beecher in Brooklyn, housed an Underground Railroad stop in the basement of Plymouth Congregational. He read the scriptures and the Constitution differently than many ministers. He bought a slave, Sarah, as an example to his parishioners and they followed his lead buying real slaves and then setting them free. The most famous slave his church helped purchase was Pinky. Out of the collection plate Beecher pulled a gold ring and placed it on her finger as a visible symbol of her freedom. They educated her and she became an educator of others. She returned at the age of eighty on one of the church anniversaries, long after Beecher's death, to return the ring to its rightful home. His philosophy and actions were important because Nook Farm was affected by his life and his work. Not all of the individual deeds by Nook Farm residents and their families were documented because it was too dangerous. Another documented stop on the Underground Railroad was in one of the Nook Farm residents' previous homes. Before moving into the Nook community, Francis and Elizabeth Hooker Gillette's home in neighboring Farmington, CT was a stop on the Underground Railroad.

Along with blacks, immigrants and women were also trying to rise. Women's suffrage was one of the causes several Nook Farm women openly supported under the leadership of Asylum Hill neighbor, Lydia Sigourney. Privately, more women in the

Nook may have been supporters. As educated ladies in some of the best and progressive schools available, they had the skills and knowledge to take a stand for the equal rights of women. The four Beecher sisters were encouraged by their father to become educated activists, and the men they married supported their efforts. Yet, they were bound by a patriarchal system and many women succumbed to its restrictions. Isabella Beecher was not supportive of the suffrage movement. This is another example of how these families were progressive, yet deeply entrenched in traditions.

Masters and Mistresses: Roles and Interactions

Aside from Yankee traditions in religion, another Yankee custom, paternalism, affected not only women; it affected African-American migrants and European immigrants. Once again, the origins come from societal baggage of the American founders. The basis for "parenting" those designated as subordinates might be derived from a reference of benevolent protection. More likely it stems from the view that the dominant ruling class not only knows what is best for the society but for its constituents as well. Therefore, the benevolent protective element could be considered a subcategory of the overall patriarchal bias. Paternalism could differ from the position of domination which prevailed predominately in the South towards slaves and other nonsoutherners. However, the presence of domination, systemic in the nation, was imposed on women and other minorities. Shearer Bowman quotes Gerda Lerner, who clarifies paternalism by stating the following:

> If patriarchy describes the institutionalized system of male dominance, paternalism describes a particular mode, a subset of patriarchal relations. This subset, best described as paternalistic dominance, involves the relationship of a dominant group, considered superior, to a subordinate group, considered inferior,

> in which the dominance is mitigated by mutual obligations and reciprocal rights.[28]

Further, the positioning of dominance is alleviated by the balance of reciprocity and commitments. Hence in the case of masters and domestic servants, the father (master) provides employment of varying degrees (day work verses room/board and salary) in exchange for childlike obedience and loyalty, as well as services rendered. The extent to which the paternalistic attitude prevailed varied among masters.

One of the expressions of paternalism in commerce was deep seated in old school Yankee manufacturing tradition. In Hartford, previously mentioned Samuel Colt built the largest private factory in the world on a tract of land larger than needed for the facility.[29] He followed the practice of paternalism which placed him, as owner, in the role of a father figure to his workers. As such, he provided housing and recreation for his labor force but on a much larger scale than his predecessors. In short, he created a small town around his factory. He set another precedent by placing his factory near the river and railroad.[30] He became a mentor to other manufacturers and his "town" served as a training model.

This same Yankee tradition of paternalism was present in residences where domestics worked. The husband and wife took on the role of parents to servants by providing room and board and advising in personal matters. Whether a household was run by loving and benevolent paternalism or strict and often cruel domination depended

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28. Shearer Bowman, *Masters and Lords: Mid 19th Century* (NY: Oxford Press, 1993), 162-163.

29. Courtney, *Joseph Hopkins Twichell*, 111.

30. Ibid., 13.

on the personalities of the master and/or his wife. They also trained servants in the manner in which they wished their households were to operate. An example of the parenting role is illustrated in the Clemens household centering on an Irish maid, Lizzie Wells. She was reported sneaking in "her loafer" [Twain] after hours and was caught one night after the alarm was set. Later he was reported playing billiards in Twain's study in the family's absence. Twain reported the whole ordeal surrounding the need for a shot-gun wedding in letters back and forth between him and his wife because she and the girls were in New York. The detailed account of Twain's plan to orchestrate the marriage was complete with the butler's and maid's assistance. He also arranged for the police to be in one room and Rev. Twichell in another, both waiting for the young lover's response in a room with Lizzie and Griffin, the butler, while Clemens presents two options: marry the girl or go to jail for immoral acts. He chose to marry. Clemens clearly took on the father role and with his wife in agreement, they were fulfilling a benevolent paternal role. This is also an example of patriarchy as Clemens was fully portraying his role as master of the house. If his wife had been home, she may have reprimanded Lizzie as a female servant.[31]

According to Sutherland (1991) and Rollins (1985), it was the wife who was in charge of running the Victorian home. If the household was likened to an English manor or estate, there would be house managers, called "Stewarts" or "Stewards" under her supervision to deal directly with indoor and outdoor staff. In standard size mansions like

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31. Three letters were written from Sam Clemens to his wife in two days detailing the Lizzie ordeal: July 17-18, 1877.

the ones in Hartford's Nook Farm community, we find the typical model of the lady of the home running the house.

> The dominant female role during most of the nineteenth century was housekeeper, an office demanding specific, unquestioned responsibilities established by custom and morality. A Nook Farm 'housekeeper's' role was transferring the duties of housekeeping to paid staff. Her duties would be limited to training and directing her servants, keeping household accounts and organizing household work.[32]

She was expected to know how to be an exemplary household worker, but one who instructed servants rather than occupying her time and dirtying her hands with chores. She would have worked closely with the lead cook or chef on menus and social preparations, teacher or governess for home schooling, as well as various categories of maids: nursery, wet nurse, chamber, and general duty. She would leave the supervision of kitchen staff such as assistants and scullery maids to the cook or chef. With such close contact daily with certain employees, it would have been easy to impose a parent-child relationship, and perhaps a more intimate rapport with long-term servants.

Likewise, in most cases, the master of the house would have interaction with male servants as their direct report: butler, coachman, and gardener, and seasonal workers like window washers. Of course, management varied from home to home. Mark Twain was involved in purchases and maintaining house accounting records, whereas Harriet Beecher-Stowe kept their books. A man's main focus was his job and the woman's was her home. Who did the work to maintain the home was a matter of affordability. The upper class could readily afford help and the emerging middle class was focused on duplicating the model of hiring help.

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32. Kathleen Gorman, "Silent Spaces: Bringing the Servants Back to Mark Twain's House in Hartford, CT" (Hartford, CT: Trinity College, 1995), 7.

Advertisements for jobs were not always subtle. Often one might read at the end of a poster or classified ad "No Irish need apply." A vague phrase useful for elimination, "U.S. citizenship preferred" could allow rejection of many an immigrant—Native American, African American, male or female. The following are examples of typical job advertisements placed by employers seeking domestic help:

> WANTED, UPPER NURSE, COACHMAN and HOUSEMAID. The upper nurse, a middle-aged person who thoroughly understands the management of children, and has been accustomed to an infant from the first month. Apply to Mr. Wright, opposite the church, Newtington-butts. (*This appears to have been a large household with lots of turnover).*

> WANTED in a small family, a good PLAIN cook, where no man-servant is kept. She must not object to a little house work, and must make herself useful. No one above the age of 30 need apply, nor will any from an office be taken. A good character will be required. No followers allowed. Apply this day to xxxxx. (*Note: followers would be children, spouses. This family also did not want to pay the commission to an agency that placed household employees.*)[33]

The success in comingling races, cultures, and classes in the confinement of homes was dependent on the attitudes of both the employer and the employee. While there is ample general information available on domestic servants in England and America, exact data and personal views are limited. According to James McPherson, Princeton History Department, only about 10 percent of the population kept diaries and journals. The lack of education and long work hours would have made it unrealistic to expect servants to keep these kinds of records or have much time for letter writing. Some information came from descendants of servants. There is a news article with a partial

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33. *London Times* Ads transcribed October 1, 1833.

interview of a black female, Ida Holmes Braxton, who worked for Harriet Beecher-Stowe in 1885 and continued in the family to Beecher's grandniece, Katharine Seymour Day. Katy Leary, long-term maid of the Clemenses, told her stories in a book through a ghost writer several years after completing over thirty years of service to one family. Several hand written notes and a lengthy letter have survived from George Griffin, the butler who was another long-term Clemens servant of sixteen years. With such scarce personal information from servants, the reliance is heavy on information preserved by employers. Based on McPherson's account, of the seventeen targeted Nook Farm families, we can only rely on one or two residents who may have left accounts of events, people, and thoughts. One might expect the percentage to be higher given the number of scholars and writers. The survival factor of such fragile papers quickly shatters the expectation of volumes being preserved. Although snippets of notes from a few residents survived time, the majority of substance comes from letters and house accounts of the two notable writers: Harriet Beecher-Stowe and Mark Twain.

Even though information specific to hired help of all Nook Farm residents was neither plentiful nor readily obtainable, the preserved information of a few residences combined with public data was enlightening and satisfied this investigation and included records in US Decennial Censuses, federal tax files verified residents, and certain facts about servant selection. Archives in the Connecticut State Library, the Hartford Public Library History Center, and the Connecticut Historical Society were beneficial for obtaining relevant facts. Interviews were conducted with local historians and senior citizens who professed to have some knowledge on the subject either through

relationships or study. The two greatest single sources were the Stowe-Day Center and the Mark Twain Museum where house records and Nook Farm archives are stored and the homes are available for tour. Of the remaining four homes still standing, the Burton and John Hooker homes have been converted to apartments. The exterior has been preserved. By special permission, the interiors of the Chamberlain and the Smith houses were toured. Standing in the now silent work spaces and living quarters of servants was so much more revealing than studying one-dimensional house plans. Unfortunately, the personal and business archives of Chamberlain have perished. Curt Hanks, current owner of Smith-Worthington Saddlery Company, advises that all Chase B. Smith archival papers and artifacts donated to the State Library have been sold. The Mark Twain Museum that currently owns the Smith home provided some information and a tour of the house which is referred to simply as 66 Forest.

Using census records from 1860-1900, specific family practices of hiring help over time could be viewed. The censuses indicate that 90 percent of homeowners in the Nook had live-in servants. As a result of the era, we can assume the remaining 10 percent had live-out servants. These men, women, and young girls reported to work daily and returned to their own homes at the end of the work day. As hired day workers, requirements would be to work some evenings, occasional weekends, and holidays for social events. We know the Clemenses and Stowes employed both live-in and live-out workers. Day jobs might have included laundresses, coachmen, gardeners, and scullery maids (whose primary chores were washing dishes and cleaning the kitchen). The census records were especially helpful because there were no state surveys available for the time

period of this study, and the only house records that have survived are from two homes: Stowe and Clemens. One major shortcoming of the census data is that every ten years the US Decennial questions varied depending on the interest of the Department of Commerce who administers these national surveys. The inconsistencies in constituent information were coupled with the ability of the enumerator and his degree of interest in the subjects. For example, under the critical column of job description, rather than specific worker title, we see general labels like "servant" or "domestic servant."

It was not until 1890 that questions on marital status appeared. Since those records for Connecticut were destroyed, we referred to 1900 findings. However, from general data on immigrant group practices and the fact that the censuses recorded persons living in the home, we can assume most were single workers. The only married servants were typically coachmen and gardeners. One known exception is the Clemens' long-term butler, George Griffin who was married and maintained a separate residence. He was listed as a household member because he had a room in Twain's house and spent a great deal of time there due to overnight stays from the Clemenses constant house guests, frequent dinner parties that lingered into late entertaining, and the regular club meetings. Regardless of the lateness of the previous off-duty time, he was present for the start of a new day and for the morning staff meeting at 6:00 a.m. On a daily basis, one of his last duties was serving the 10:00 p.m. nightcap.

Griffin was an African American who was a former slave. Griffin was one of three black servants recorded in Clemens' ledgers. The other two were cooks for short periods whereas the butler was a long-term servant of about sixteen years. Only three

black servants were recorded in house ledgers to have worked in the Clemens home during the seventeen years when they usually maintained a staff of seven at one time. Most of the servants were Irish females, the *Bridgets*, which was common practice of the era and reflective of the households in Nook Farm. As listed in Chapter III, between 1860 and 1900, the Nook Farm community employed 85% females and 15% males; 75% were single verses 25% married with an overwhelming majority being Irish (69%), followed by 13% English, 8% African American, 4% German, 2% French Canadian, and 2% Swedish. Another way of interpreting the data is 92% white and 8% black which is in keeping with national standards.

Three of the Nook Farm households listed African-American live-in servants: Chamberlain, Clemens, and Stowe. The 1870 census shows the Chamberlains hired Ross Jackson, born in Maryland, as coachman. He would have been housed in the living quarters of the carriage house which was adjacent to the Clemens' carriage house. Their coachman was Irish born Patrick McAleer; his wife and nine children lived in the carriage house. His salary of $600 a year was higher than the average amount paid for his position which was in the $400 to $500 range and almost double the butler's wages of $360. The Clemens' butler, George Griffin, born in Maryland, was also a slave in Virginia. He started work in 1875 and appears in the 1880 census. House records and letters substantiate the previous claim that only two other blacks were in their employ: a cook and a maid.

The Stowe's are documented as having the largest number of black servants. Their first home, Oakholm, was a mansion on the farthest southeastern section of the

Nook neighborhood. When they moved into their second Nook Farm home, it was referred to as a retirement "cottage" where there was no carriage house. Census reports beginning in 1860 consistently show two female servants: one cook and one maid, even when their seven children were living in the home. This suggests that hired day help was utilized because later reports indicate that when the Stowe's twin daughters were adults and Harriet was elderly, they took over Harriet's management of the Florida and Connecticut homes. While the 1870 census lists two Irish female live-in servants in Hartford, Florida house records show three "colored girls"—Laura and Tesia Summerall and Felicia Zeigler. Salary excerpts noted in Figure 6 give an idea of chores, pay, and workers. In 1880, two black females appear on the census: Felecia Primus and Phoebe Lawrence, both from Florida.[34]

December, 1878		
13th	To Elsie for a day's cleaning	.50
	To Apphie for ironing	.50
17th	To Apphie for washing & ironing	1.00
21st	To Nellie going to Jacksonville	3.00
January, 1879		
01st	To Elvis Hurtley for a month's work	2.00
15th	To Henderson for labor (10 hrs. @ $2.00)	2.56
29th	To Frank	30.00
	To Atlas (subscribed for 1 year)	16.50
	To Beth in full to Feb 1	9.00
	To Nellie in full to Feb 1	8.00

Figure 6. A Two-Month Salary Record for Harriet Beecher Stowe's Servants (Source: Harriet Beecher Stowe Museum Archives)

34. Stowe-Day Center archive files, accounting records.

Twichell's family had one black female servant from Georgia as did a few other residents in the area. There was Mary Deming, Bessie Johnson, Ida Holmes Braxton, her aunt, and her niece, Anna Booze, all from Georgia.[35] Ida stated that her aunt was the first to come, and was the maid at Reverend Twichell's. According to Ida Braxton, she started working for Stowe at age sixteen in 1885. In 1891 she married and kept house for herself. She and Bessie Johnson started at the same time in the Stowe home. Ida said Mrs. Stowe would have parties for the female colored servants in the neighborhood from Georgia. It was an open house luncheon on Thursdays.[36] Mrs. Stowe entertained by singing and playing the piano and they ate special food (which they no doubt prepared), and "Rev. Twichell helped and was a good man." She also said that "Reverend Twichell organized a Sunday school class for these young girls from Georgia—he had one too. Twichell knew it was too far to get to the Baptist Church so he had [Sunday school] services for them on Sunday afternoon [in his home]."[37] In two separate news articles, both Ida Braxton and Anna Booze are noted as members of Union Baptist Church in downtown Hartford.[38] Charles L. Chase who lived on Farmington Avenue to the east of Nook Farm on the other side of Park River, was President of The Hartford Fire Insurance Company. It is noted that he brought several [servants] north and entertained coloreds in his home.

In the massive number of published and unpublished books, articles, manuscripts, journals, and letters including the five linear feet of Mark Twain related documents on

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35. Stowe-Day Foundation Newsletter, Harriet Beecher Stowe and Servants, November 1888.

36. *The Hartford Times,* "Harriet Beecher Stowe's Maid Visits Home," November 1, 1943.

37. Katharine S. Day, Note in K. S. Day's hand 22 Aug 1959, as told to Day by Mrs. Braxton, Twain Museum files.

38. *The Hartford Courant,* "Raising Money To Pay Off Mortgage," November 3, 1911.

file at the Bancroft Library, to date there is no mention that any member of the Clemens family ever invited any black person into their home for any social or business matter; this included dignitaries like Booker T. Washington and Frederick Douglass whom Clemens met. Clemens wrote a letter of support regarding Douglass being allowed to maintain his legislative position in Washington, DC. It would also include local men of note like ministers and businessmen. Clemens met Washington at a London reception in 1899. Subsequently, he was in close contact with Washington several times on Standard Oil tycoon Henry H. Roger's private yacht, Kanawha. Clemens had this to say about Washington at a Carnegie Hall fundraiser for Tuskegee Institute on 22 January 1906:

> It was at a Fourth of July reception in Mr. Choate's house in London that I first met Booker Washington. I have met him a number of times since, and he always impresses me pleasantly. Last night he was a mulatto. I didn't notice until he turned, while he was speaking, and said something to me. It was a great surprise to me to see that he was mulatto, and had blue eyes. How unobservant a dull person can be. Always, before, he was black, to me, and I had never noticed whether he had eyes at all, or not.[39]

This is important to note because it speaks to Samuel Clemens' evolution as a humanist. It is doubtful that he truly noticed features of any of the Black cooks or the butler, Griffin in previous years. Perhaps that is why Griffin, a mulatto, was referred by Twain and his family in general rather than specific terms. For example, Clara Clemens, Twain's daughter wrote about Griffins "huge black paws" on the piano.[40] In a compliment, Clemens wrote about Griffin in a private sketch of his family in his later

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39. Mark Twain, *Autobiography of Mark Twain,* vol. 1, Harriett E. Smith, ed. (Berkley: University of California Press, 2010), 303.

40. Clara Clemens, *My Father, Mark Twain* (Brooklyn, NY, AMS Pub, 1976), 27-28, 110, 112.

years between 1901-1903. He said, "George, the colored ex-slave was with us then; ...and was as good as he was black."[41]

Further, as Clemens, the man, or as Twain, the author, the list of noninvitees includes those he helped with their education, such as the esteemed Mc Guinn of Yale Law School who became the mentor of Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall. It even included the Fisk Jubilee Singers that he loved to hear perform. Clemens had long been acquainted with slaves from his Missouri upbringing. He also fraternized with the black workers at his in-laws home in Elmira, New York. Through his many travels around the world, he experienced many different cultures and interacted with multiple races of servants during his life time. From published works and private unpublished letters, journals, and manuscripts, there is a continuous path of growth in accepting and appreciating nonwhite peoples. In addition to the benefit of being widely traveled, his wife and her abolitionist-minded family may have helped interpret some of his experiences differently than his childhood reference, and there were undoubtedly other influences as he aged. One known person to have had a positive impact was his closest friend and pastor, Joseph Twichell.

Although Harriet Beecher Stowe was born in Connecticut and lived in Ohio, Massachusetts, and Maine, she wintered in Mandarin (now Jacksonville) Florida from 1867-1884. The Laurel Grove Plantation produced Mandarin Oranges. She became well acquainted with blacks in the Mandarin community and more so with her servants. Several young female girls came back with her to live and work for her and other families

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41. Twain, *A Family Sketch* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2014), 16.

in Hartford. In 1872, Harriet spearheaded the building project for The Mandarin School, where both black and white children were educated.

Both Twain and Stowe made it known that they were observers of people and integrated people they knew into the characters in their books. Stowe is specific about some of the African Americans from whom she modeled fictitious characters. Twain is somewhat more general in his accounts naming some of the slaves from his childhood, but does not give credit to his in-law's cook or hired hand, John Lewis, or his own butler, George Griffin for their impact on his two most famous works which were both written while Griffin was in his employ and Lewis worked for the Langdon's. It is believed by some that he gives George Griffin indirect credit in the foreword to *Huckleberry Finn* when he gives this warning per G. G., Griffin's initials:

> PERSONS attempting to find a motive in this will be prosecuted; persons attempting to find a moral in it will be banished; persons attempting to find a plot in it will be shot.
> BY ORDER OF THE AUTHOR, Per G. G., Chief of Ordnance.

It is understandable that Clemens may not have wanted to specify Griffin by revealing his name in the role of a top official in the military and guardian of all weapons. There are no entries in journals or in letters referring to his intentions. One can surmise that it is a gesture of extreme satirical humor, in the true form of Clemens' genius.

Samuel Clemens emerged over time through his pen name and in his birth name as an outspoken crusader of social ills. He matured in a slow process from referring to 'foreigners' in derogatory manners. He used less negative racial slurs in his private journals and fewer unkind phrases in letters. He became more global and embraced the differences as what they were—differences. He caught up with progressive philosophies

and actions of other neighbors to overcome principles taught to him in his youth. He struggled with beliefs in God and was a professed agnostic, boldly in the center of Protestant believers, including his numerous minister neighbors, his best friend and pastor, and his wife. In the last book that he published, it could be assessed that he became more balanced in his youthful humor, genius satire, and impatience through temperance with age and the experiences living brings. By the time he wrote this last book, he had lost several of his own family—his son, two of three daughters, his wife, his longtime coachman, longtime butler, and several friends. Twichell did survive him as did daughter, Clara. In this last book, *Extract from Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven,* he depicted a heaven of people from all races, creeds, and colors in a universal spirit of equality.

Harriett Beecher Stowe and her husband died before Twain. They gradually slowed down on social issues and causes giving in to the physical pace of aging. Harriet lost some of her mental faculties. She would often go into the Clemens' green house located on the common grassy reserve shared by their residences and Chamberlain's. There she would pull flowers up by the root and bring them to Mrs. Clemens who had a pair of scissors placed inside the greenhouse in the hopes Harriet would use them.

The period 1870-1890 was of significance in the lives of residents in Nook Farm. The writings of news publishers and playwrights and authors still exist as notable reads. Charles Smith's saddlery is thriving on Homestead Avenue with world-wide acclaim. By special invitation from the White House, a request was made because they are considered optimum global specialists. The Atlanta University has continued to expand and follow

the ideals of its founding staff and faculty. W.E.B. Du Bois has never lost his footing in the place of time for he is as relevant today as he was when he lived. Asylum Hill Congregational Church now reflects the population of Hartford with vibrant and pulsating outreach ministries that began with Twichell's starting point. The prevailing question is, for all of the expressed thoughts and actions of the lives Nook Farm residents touched directly and indirectly during their lifetime, did their actions and beliefs reflect honestly upon them as individuals, upon the high-brow upper class to which they belonged, or were they representative of the larger American society?

CHAPTER V

MARK TWAIN AND SAMUEL CLEMENS

We have the very best gang of servants in America, now.[1] –Mark Twain, 1876

The Man, The Master

Neither as the man, Samuel Clemens, nor as the penned author, Mark Twain do we find dedicated thoughts on servants and masters. Perhaps it can be speculated that within the confines of class, rules of position, and conduct were so ingrained that they were unquestioned and, therefore, unchallenged. This is one plausible reason why a man of so many opinions on socioeconomic issues is silent and lends no voice of either master or servant on the subject. We are, therefore, obliged to look at hiring practices, general behavior, and histories of behavior described by him and others who interacted on a regular basis. In the first part of this chapter we will examine his views as expressed in his book *The Gilded Age*. To begin, there are only two references to masters and two on servants. They are uninformative and hardly worth the mention. There is a remark about the ranks of masters and a reference to the Annals of the Four Masters.[2] In the context of elite Washington, DC quarters, he mentions the "trim colored servants," meaning well groomed to perfection.[3] The second is a mention of Henry Brierly being admired by

1. Mark Twain written as Samuel Clemens, Letter to William Dean Howells, October 11, 1876. Mark Twain Project Papers, Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkley.

2. Twain and Warner, *The Gilded Age,* 136, 349.

3. Ibid., 269.

servants, axemen, teamsters, and cooks."[4] His absence of comments is true to the protocol of servants being unnoticed. In this context, the Clemens household was typical.

Only the butler was seen by guests, unless a large dinner party required additional service by selected maids. Otherwise, kitchen staff remained down the hall from the dining room, designed to muffle noise in the kitchen area and the basement. They were not allowed to use the main staircase, except from the second to third floor because there were no back stairs. The invisible staff would prepare meals and clean, staying clear of the master, mistress, and children. They could be interrupted at any time of the day through a call system during the long twelve-plus hour days. Though not clear how much, it appears that the staff was given some time off weekly. They must have had leisure time when the family took short trips as there are accounts of activity. In general, the servants seemed to be pleased with working conditions and the Clemens seemed pleased with the servants. The class distinction appears to have been rigid and mutually unchallenged and undisturbed.

On the one hand, servants largely viewed themselves as wage laborers hired to do a job. Sutherland suggests attitudes of employers towards servants contributed to the level of satisfaction of a servant. While some masters and mistresses ran the home by strict rules and harsh interactions, other atmospheres were reported more relaxed and congenial. The latter appears to be the case in the Clemens home as documented in letters by visitors and friends, as well as the account by maid Katy Leary. Further, Sutherland suggests that some employers did not speak to servants unless it related to work. Sam and Livy Clemens engaged in greetings and casual conversation with those servants in care of

4. Ibid., 190.

the children, personal attendants, and the butler. Wages and living conditions could also contribute to servant contentment. The Clemens' household ledger indicated wages were comparable to standard pay scales. Servant accommodations were heated, lighted, furnished with indoor plumbing and adequate sleeping, and common quarters. Considering the cordial and comfortable working environment, the long hours for standard wage must have been perceived as fair and agreeable by servants.

In 1876 when Samuel Clemens wrote about having the best gang of servants to his friend William Dean Howells, he emphasized "now" for good reason. High turnover was common practice among domestic servants. The high volume of dinner parties, house guests, and Clemens' sporadic outbursts created additional stresses to the typical servant drudgery. The fourteen thousand square foot, twenty-five room house at 351 Farmington Avenue was a typical size mansion for the new upper class. This is in comparison to the tycoons of epic means whose homes were two and three times the size of the Clemens'. Nonetheless, the activity in the home undoubtedly doubled or tripled the work load of the Farmington staff. In 1876, Clemens and his wife were pleased with key staff: Rosina Hay, nursery maid and German tutor; Patrick McAleer, coachman and caretaker of the milk cow, horses, ducks and other "barn" animals; George Griffin, butler and overseer of house servants; and probably a very satisfactory cook whose name is not available. The other servants, gardener, cleaning maids, and kitchen helpers were not as critical as the main four, except one critical position. A lady's maid to Mrs. Clemens had not yet been filled to her satisfaction. In 1880, Catherine (Katy) Leary came in and remained the longest in service until 1910, except for one year 1895-96.

Unlike Rosina who left for marriage in 1883, Katy was almost loyal to a fault, refusing two marriage proposals for her loyalty and dedication to the Clemens. Loyalty was resilient in the character of Patrick and George as well. Patrick moved to Hartford with the Clemens and remained until 1891 when a bankrupt Clemens was forced to live more cheaply in Europe. Upon the dreadful announcement of closing up the house and relieving the staff, George volunteered to continue to work for no wages until the family departed. As a master, Clemens and his wife must have been good judges of character traits that were important for their particular needs because in addition to loyalty, patience was required.

Katy and George were in closer daily contact since they worked in the house and were granted the opportunity to exercise more patience with their master. His rage could be over any wee thing. In one account of these outbursts, which were frequent and often racy, Katy explains, "Why, he used to get terrible mad - sometimes when he'd get a new suit of clothes. The tailor was a damned fool, he'd say, that made that suit! he was an idiot! this was wrong and that was wrong! the pockets were too small - and oh, how he'd fuss!"[5] Clemens frequently wrote of these episodes in letters and journals. One including George seems to be a daily happening. One morning upon discovering a button was missing from his shirt, he threw it out of his two-story bathroom window. Not satisfied with three shirts, he repeated the action with refrained exclamations because his wife was present.[6] Of course, George who was not in service as a valet, per se, did have the

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5. Mary Lawton, *A Lifetime with Mark Twain* (Montana: Kessinger Publishing, 2008), 125.

6. Twain, *My Autobiography: "Chapters" from the North American Review* (NY: Dover, 1999), 49.

pleasure of retrieving the shirts. That same morning Clemens revealed that he often cursed when giving instructions to George.[7] At breakfast, Livy made a guarded remark about censoring strong language for the children's benefit. As George stood behind his service screen, "Both children broke out in one voice with this comment, "Why, mamma, papa uses it! ...we often listen over the balusters when you are in the hall explaining things to George."[8]

It may be concluded that Katy, George, Rosina, and Patrick were employed by a unique master whose genius, humor, wit, and kindness were often offset by erratic behavior of outbursts escalating to rage, as well as impromptu acts out of character for his day. As farfetched as it might seem, a London paper printed a sketch of him walking the streets in his robe and slippers.[9] He wrote of an incident with neighbor Harriet Stowe which also broke etiquette rules of proper dress code. Apparently chided by his wife upon the return of his spontaneous visit with an open shirt collar, he quickly assembled a silver tray with a cravat and top hat with a note of apology which George was to deliver.[10] One can surmise from numerous similar accounts that absent mindedness was a part of his random behavior.

Suffice it to say, it is not possible to separate the man from the master in the case of Mark Twain. Samuel Clemens was consistently the same person though able to confine his language and erratic behavior in certain public settings when speaking, and in

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7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. The London Times, October 1833.

10. Clemens letter to Mrs. R. M Yost, January 14, 1887, MTP; Albert Paine, *Mark Twain; A Biography*, vol. 2, (New York: Harper Brothers, 1912), 2, 566.

church. He was also generally able to maintain composure in the direct company of children and women. The latter is indicative of his general attitude towards the opposite sex and reflective in his treatment of female servants. To begin, his relationship with his mother was one of love, respect, and admiration which necessarily seemed to be repeated in his deep devotion for his wife. In 1869, he wrote to his sister about his future bride: " I take as much pride in her brains as I do in her beauty, and as much pride in her happy and equable disposition."[11] The degree to which his behavior supported this declaration is the fact that his wife proofed his work and he left her to manage the house. While Clemens was a great observer of people, he expressed respect for his wife's judgment of character in hiring servants: "Mrs. Clemens could always tell enough about a servant by the look of him – more, in fact, than she, or anybody else, could tell about him by his recommendations."[12] Admiring a woman's brains and involving her in his work was uncommon in the age of patriarchal rule. Though the surviving house bookkeeping ledgers are in his hand, the majority of the daily operations were left to her discretion. According to Katy Leary's dictated book, he was kind hearted and respectful towards her and there are no contradictory accounts by her or friends and neighbors. Further, by 1901 he evolved to the point of boldly speaking out in favor of women's suffrage in a speech entitled, "Votes for Women," to the point of speaking for women's full enfranchisement in the electoral process and predicted that within twenty-five years, they would have the

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11. "SLC to Pamela A. Moffett, 14 Jan 1869, Davenport, Iowa (UCCL 00233)." In Mark Twain's Letters, 1869.

12. Twain, Autobiography Volume 1 (Berkley, LA: UC Press, 2010), 335.

ballot.[13] This proved to be true; the Women's Suffrage Amendment to the Constitution was passed by the United States Congress in 1919 and ratified by all the states in 1920.

Additionally, the modest female servant quarters on the second floor could be said to be a reflection a master's opinion of both servants and females. There was a full bathroom within the space with single and double sleeping rooms allowing for basic furnishings. There was a privacy door at the hall, the ceilings were high enough to stand upright, and they had heat, electricity, and running water. This might not seem out of the ordinary; however, it was not necessarily the norm. The garret style space in many houses was poorly lit and generally cramped and unventilated. On Forest Street, the Smith house dedicated such lovely spacious accommodations they do not resemble servant quarters.

Based on observations of the six existing Nook Farm homes, the Clemens' spaces for servants were reasonable, demonstrating respect and consideration of comfort. Just as Clemens evolved in his position on women's rights, his life-long journey on race was more complicated. He had a positive foundation on women and his wife encouraged him as did she and her abolitionist family. Unlike the mono-directional path of feminine enlightenment, race and culture seemed to be as difficult for him to resolve as religion. He was open to change and that may surely be grounds for tout est pardonné for early racist remarks that were as insulting as any Klansman, though there are no indications that he was a registered member or that he participated in any Klan-like activities. The point is that whether extreme in acting out violence or liberal minded, white America

13. Twain's speech was given at the Annual Meeting of the Hebrew Technical School for Girls in the Temple Emanuel, Hartford, CT, January 20, 1901.

generally had negative views about everyone but themselves. Twain was no exception. Besides his wife's family, the Langdon's, additional influence of friends like Twichell and travels to many lands helped him overcome the deeply ingrained prejudices taught by his parents, John Marshall and Jane Lampton Clemens, and the Hannibal Community of his youth.

His wife's influence can be witnessed in the multicultural variety of female servants. However, there is no record of black housemaids, only cooks. One particular reference is noted in 1879 where Twain writes to friend Joe Twichell asking for a referral of a black cook because "they [he and wife] have a hankering for them."[14] Other mentions about maids include race, culture and religion; none are African-American girls or women from 1874, when they moved into the house, until 1891 when they left. Besides an occasional black cook, the only other person of color was the butler, George Griffin, of whom he wrote the most.

Twain repeatedly told the story of first meeting Griffin saying, "He came to our house once, an entire stranger, to clean some windows – and remained eighteen years."[15] It was also in reference to Griffin that he gave his wife credit for her astute hiring as previously mentioned. Griffin was the only other male in the house. However, for more reasons than merely male bonding or for the sake of unity in numbers, they participated in harmless boyish pranks, some of Griffin's design. They were like minded in wit and humor. Griffin so understood Twain's train of thought that he would laugh prematurely and inappropriately from behind his service screen in the dining room. While this

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14. Letter from Twain to Joseph Twichell, 2 Oct 1879. MTP.

15. Twain, *Autobiography*, vol. 1, 335.

violation of the "invisible servant code" was an irritation, Clemens did not appear to support his wife's occasional whim to fire Griffin. For the butler to take such liberties also comments on his conflicting position of confidant, comrade, and possible consultant.

Twain admitted that George was equal to him in many respects and superior in others, one of which was business. He asked George to invest in what was to be his most costly business failure, the Paige compositor, and George declined the $1,000 investment.[16] On a salary of $360 a year, even with room and board, how could a servant be in such a position? Griffin who had potential which far exceeded his position, was an entrepreneur. He formed a private banking business within the African-American community to compensate for the racial bias of bank loan officers. It was funded by Griffin's horse race betting. Literate, tall, handsome, personable, peace maker and peace keeper among the servants and the African-American community settling disputes, and Deacon in the AME Zion Church, were but a few of the character traits Clemens attributed to Griffin in the manuscript, "A Family Sketch," of which two-thirds was devoted to this servant. The servant who was the first representative of the home and family as greeter, holder of the key to the house, china, silver, liquor....everything....the ultimate trust. Yet, Clemens was ever mindful that Griffin was first, and foremost, black. Common references to him included descriptive race terms in letters, notebooks, and in the manuscript which was recently published in 2014: "He was as good as he was black,"

16. Mark Twain's *Notebooks & Journals, Volume III: (1883-1891),* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 1980), 336-7, 496; Notebook #17, August 1887-July 1888 (336-337); Notebook #29, June 25, 1889 (496).

or "George, the colored butler."[17] Clemens admitted he hired Griffin because he could not bring himself to order a white man about. Based on this confidential admission, it is confusing that he ordered white men about all over Europe. Though at one time he expressed low regard for the French declaring rather than send folk to hell, just send them to Paris. Could this have impacted his decision to hire Claude Joseph Beuchotte as butler and personal aide. Did he consider the Frenchman, though white, in a similar social class as African Americans, or had he progressed as a humanist enough to comfortably order about a white man? He referred to him by first name only as he did Griffin in person and in writings, so much so that his last name was unknown to the public for years after Twain's death in 1910. Still, he never referred to him as Claude, the white butler or Claude, the French butler; he was simply, "Claude the butler."[18] Beuchotte was hired after Twain returned to the States sometime between 1900-1901 according to Katy Leary's book. Unfortunately, Twain was more preoccupied with death and religion after the loss of all but one child, members of his birth family, and Patrick and George.

It is fairly well established that as far as masters are concerned, Clemens was a decent employer. He was typical in many respects regarding the social hierarchy of class, maintaining the distinction though it was often crossed with George Griffin. Clemens appears most progressive in gender nonbias; and the least progressive in racial bias. Publicly, Mark Twain would speak at black fundraisers and express genuine enjoyment

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17. Twain, "A Family Sketch" transcribed unpublished manuscript, Mark Twain Museum Archives, 4.

18. Lawton, *A Life Time,* 312.

of Negro spirituals.[19] Regardless of his nonmelodic voice, he often sang them at home accompanying himself on the piano. When his wife was on her death bed, he sang these songs, possibly to comfort himself as much as her. Despite such fondness for culture, he remained fairly insensitive because, in spite of his fame for Negro dialect, his greatest literary shortcoming was ignorance of the African-American culture.

Such a bold statement demands explanation. First, there are discrepancies between public and private comments. Tedious reading of his notebooks and journals reveals on-going use of derogatory terms in reference to African Americans. The manuscript, "A Family Sketch," which was intended for publication has remarkable statements about people being the same in specific reference to black and white people. However, the following entries speak for themselves.

Volume I (1855-1873)

- colored
- nigger
- darkey
- dusky
- and the usual descriptive comments of "their black faces" even after identifying the race of the people he was observing.[20]

Volume II (1877-1883)

- colored
- nigger
- darkey
- dusky

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19. William Phipps, *Mark Twain's Religion* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2003), 167; Among his favorites were "Flow Gently Sweet Afton," "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," "Nobody Knows the Trouble I See," "Go Chain The Lion Down," "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?," Oh Dem Golden Slippers," and "Rise, Shine, Give God The Glory."

20. Twain's *Notebooks & Journals, Volume I* (Oakland: University of California Press, 1976).

- in comparison to use of the word "boy," he attaches it by culture for all except Blacks where it is attached by race: Scot boy, Italian boy, China boy, Spanish boy – then colored boy and darkey boy.[21]

Volume III (1883-1891)

- colored
- nigger
- darkey[22]

It is worth noting that these terms were used in general descriptions of unknown persons he observed as well as dignitaries such as the Consul of Morroco and "Clara's darkey preacher." While colored is used 99 percent of the time in volume three, the use of nigger and darkey are still present. This is significant because Clemens is credited for becoming less prejudiced and more of a humanist as he aged.

When Clemens' pen wrote of Negro and white issues, he seemed to be successful because the Negro was depicted in similar roles subservient to white superiority. The context, popular then and popular now, reflects on a continued global society that has adopted racial bias against African peoples as a standard of reference. When he shifts to attempt to operate in person or by pen within the African-American culture, his position and popularity weaken. For example, *Puddin' Head Wilson* (black culture) was not a popular work in the same manner as *The Prince and the Pauper* (English culture). The latter was criticized because Twain was not experienced enough in English society. In other words, there were too many familiarities that he missed or misinterpreted. In person, he told a racist-based story relating to plantation/slavery culture in a white church

21. Twain's *Notebooks & Journals, Volume II* (Oakland: University of California Press, 1976).

22. Twain's *Notebooks and Journals, Volume III* (Oakland: University of California Press, 1980).

in Hartford. The audience was very responsive and after it was such a hit, he decided to tell that same tale to a local black church. Need more be said? Perhaps, a wee bit more.

There is seems to be a question many times in ascertaining exactly where Twain stands on an issue because of his spot on wit and often lampooning satire. He appears to amuse himself with humanity, but often at whose cost? The 'one more example' concerns an incident in New York in 1893. On one of many return trips from Europe to New York while rebuilding his finances, he met with George Griffin. Griffin agreed to accompany Twain to his publisher at the Century Building in Union Square. Though George was mulatto, he was a recognizable African-American man. Clemens describes this incident in two private writings. The first is in a letter to his wife, written on the day of the encounter, and the second a few years later in the manuscript, "A Family Sketch." The accounts are similar but provide different detailed embellishments. Excerpts to the point include the following:

> ... the clerks glared with curiosity – a white man and a negro walking together was a new spectacle to them. The glance embarrassed George, but not me, for the companionship was proper. In the first editorial room I introduced "Mr. Griffin" to Mr. Buel and Mr. Johnson, and embarrassed all three. Conversation was difficult.
>
> I went to the main editorial room. He [Mr. Gilder] handed me a type written manuscript. George was decamping. I called him back, introduced him to Mr. Gilder, and said – "Listen to this George." I read the paragraph and asked him how its literary quality struck him. He modestly gave his opinion in a couple of sentences. I returned it with the remark that was my opinion also.
>
> Passing the St. Nicolas editorial room, Mr. Clark hailed me to show me something. Mr. Clark asked what did I think of a new design cover. I examined it then handed it without comment to George, introduced him and asked for his opinion. With diffidence, but honestly, he gave it and I endorsed it. Conversation not fluent.

> Mr. Carey, manager of the business department proposed refreshments. During the walk in Union Square, George dropped behind, but I brought him forward, introduced him to Carey and placed him between us. When we arrived at Carey's refreshment place, George politely excused himself and went his way. Carey said, "What's the game? That's no ordinary coon. Who is that?[23]

Twain deferred explaining by saying it was a long story and he would explain when they returned to the Century Building. Accordingly, after "the editorial people heard the history of George Griffin, and were sorry they hadn't been acquainted with in before he came – they would have 'shaken hands, and been glad to; wouldn't' I bring him again?"[24] What was the history of Griffin that changed a cold reception in to a warm invitation? Regardless of Griffin's, or should that be "Mr. Griffin's" discomfort at multiple intervals, Twain insisted on proceeding with his agenda. Granted the excerpts are lengthy, but necessary to illustrate the point. The amusement was paramount at Griffin's expense. All the employees at the Century building obtained resolve, so everyone was comfortable. Everyone, that is except for Griffin, who was left to manage that on his own.

This episode was layered with multiple and mixed messages, the least of which was uplift or even paternalistic, though as a master, there was evidence of Twain responding in a fatherly role. He once gave George sage advice when at odds with another man. The most elaborate example was arranging, with George's help, a shotgun wedding in the Clemens home for a immigrant maid named Lizzie. The accounts of it are

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23. Twain, *A Family Sketch and Other Private Writings* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2014), 26-28.

24. Ibid.

hysterical as Clemens masterminds the scheme and involves all of the players, finally giving Lizzie's guy the ultimatum of two officials who were present and on standby: the sheriff and jail or the preacher and marriage. He salvaged her dignity as a father would have done. In a way, it also provided uplift, as marriage would have ended Lizzie's servitude.

However, not much about advancing his servants is documented, beyond this story, except giving letters of recommendation on gilded-edged stationary (ironic) to Patrick and George in 1891 before the Clemens family departed for Europe. There was one mention of Katy Leary receiving a sum upon Clemens' death. The myth suggested that Katy was in the Last Will and Testament that actually only had two heirs, his living daughters, Jean and Clara. There was a codicil in the event one of the daughters expired, dated in 1909. According to Albert Paine, Twain's biographer, who quoted in the *New York Times* the day of Twain's funeral, April 23, 1910, that a second codicil would be read by only surviving daughter Clara, that made provisions for some of the older servants. Katy Leary was given $10,000. According to Dave Manuel's inflation calculator, one dollar in 1910 is worth $25 in 2015. That brings her gift to an equivalent $250,000 which she used to open a boarding house in New York City where Claude, the butler, resided. Having recently discovered the article, verification of all the recipients is postponed until such time that the document can be verified in the Connecticut State Archive Probate Records which are not yet digitized.

Oddly, Clemens was so impressed with an act of heroism that he was moved to comparably abundant benevolence. In a 2,000 word letter written over two days on

August 25 and 27, 1877 to friends, Dean and Elinor Howells Sam wrote of his eye-witnessed and second-hand account of the event spotlighting John T. Lewis, a free-born African American. Previously, the coachman for Clemens' father-in-law, Lewis was in 1877 a tenant farmer on Twain's sister-in-law's farm in Elmira, NY. On August 23 while summering in Elmira, Olivia saw the second of two carriages out of control headed down the steep East hill. Holding the reigns was Olivia's brother Charles' wife, Ida, their daughter Julia, and Julia's nursemaid. Lewis, coming in the opposite direction, situated his wagon diagonally across the road, jumped out and grabbed the bridle of horses with his bare hands, risking his life. When Sam, who went frantically running after the carriage arrived, all were safe.[25] The Jervis Langdon's cancelled his $700 farming debt and presented Lewis with books and a gold watch, a possession he had hoped to one day own. According to Mandy Gagel of the Mark Twain Project, Charles Langdon and Clemens each gave Lewis $1,000 to purchase farm land. Further, she reports that Clemens continued to pay Lewis a small "pension" and in 1904 instructed his daughters to continue payments upon his death.[26]

One reason Clemens' gestures of generosity towards Lewis are unusual is because this is the only record of long-term benevolence. Further, in a general estimation over time from 1877 to Lewis' death in 1906, it spanned about thirty years. Comparably, Clemens' long-term coachman, Patrick McAleer, passed that same year leaving his wife Mary, unskilled and in her sixties. Thus far, not only has no record of benevolence

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25. Letter from Sam Clemens to Wm Dean & Elinor M Howells, August 25 and 27, 1877. Mark Twain Project and Papers, Bancroft Library, Berkley, CA.

26. Electronic letter, January 21, 2015, Sharon Goetz, MT Project, to B. Smith-Stewart.

towards her surfaced, there is none in the direction of Mary Griffin, widow of butler George Griffin who died in 1897. Mary Griffin, also uneducated and unskilled, lived a meager existence and died a pauper in her eighties in 1937. Though Clemens was in financial ruin at the time of Griffin's death, he had fully recovered and returned to the states in 1904.

With the aid of Standard Oil mogul Henry Rogers, Clemens was able to recover and exceed his former financial status. They were introduced by a mutual friend, Dr. Rice, during the same visit to New York as the Griffin episode. From 1893 to 1898 Clemens followed Roger's suggested plan and repaid all debtors, though not required by law to do so. By 1904 when he returned to the United States to live, Clemens' wife, son, and a daughter, Susy, had passed, as well as servants Griffin and McAleer, and several friends, Lewis as one. Steamboat travel across the Atlantic would not have made it possible for Twain to attend Griffin's funeral. He did attend Patrick's and spoke highly of his character.[27] However, in both cases, the absence of any kindness by Clemens extended to either widow, even in the form a letter, seems out of character. Both men with wives named Mary, left them in slightly different predicaments. Patrick's wife bore nine children and by the time of his death, as adults should have been able to care for her. George's wife was left more destitute—in her forties with a two-month old son, limited to the options of cook, maid, or laundress in New York City, alone with no family. She eventually moved back to Hartford which was more familiar.[28]

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27. "Mark Twain Pays Tribute to Servant," *Hartford Daily Courant* (28 Feb 1906): 3.

28. The information on Mary Griffin was obtained from George's and Mary's probate records. The information on Patrick and Mary was obtained from noted US Census records and Geer's Directory.

It is probable that there were no harsh feelings as nothing was expected, and it brings to light the whole question of, what would the obligations of a master be? There were guidelines on hiring practices based on character and references. There were distinctions of roles with multiple delineations of placement, uniforms, and a protracted list of servant do's and don'ts. It certainly was generous to reward Katy with an inheritance for thirty years of personal sacrifice and loyal service. It was benevolent to support Lewis, who was not his servant, for thirty years. However, it remains a puzzle on the lack of evidence of any show of compassion towards the Mary and Mary widows.

The Myth

The master was a man of epic proportions whose legacy was bigger than the actual life he led. Similarly, the social history issues presented in this paper are larger than the life of any one man. Yet, he is representative of the thoughts and feelings of the American decision makers whose quests set up a perpetual system in society that would further their success at the expense of the unskilled, unregulated, domestic worker. The height to which he rose during his lifetime caused a positive and a negative response from his public.

Of the less favorable occurs in his hometown of Hannibal, Missouri. Awareness of this phenomenon occurred during an interview with former Museum Director, Regina Faden, PhD who shared her experience upon assuming the position. Paraphrasing, she stated that not only were the facts of the Clemens family distorted, relevant information about his literary works was compromised. She felt compelled to preserve the truth of this important historical legacy and set the record straight so that the myth was

recognizable to the man and his family. Apparently, her persistence with evidence proved to effect change. Though she was protective of the names of persons who resisted modifications, an article by Terrell Dempsey to the *Courier-Post* reveals how, for nine decades, one man, George Mahan, whose family is steeped in slavery, presented an outdated and incorrect presentation of Twain and his family.[29] It was apparently his doing without the encouragement, consent or instructions from the Clemenses. It may be difficult to understand why it took so long for a Regina Faden to come along and take a stand for truth, but for history's sake, the truth is not only enriching the message, it has encouraged other museums to embrace positive exhibits on African Americans.

Ironically, the very man Mahan was devoted to, changed; but Mahan did not evolve and change over time. Dempsey proceeds to explain that signage has misinformed countess visitors who depended on Hannibal to deliver a piece of history. "Nigger Jim" is posted near Nipper Park, though Twain never used that as a part of Jim's name in the book. Further, the Clemens family was portrayed by Mahan to be a prosperous upper middle class family where Twain's father was a prominent attorney. Signage purports a building as his office. More discouraging is a taped tour that informs visitors that John Clemens met with clients there, and the signs are official signage of the Missouri Historical Society where Mahan had affiliations.[30] Dempsey is a local Hannibal attorney, completing a book on slavery in relation to Twain. Faden is Executive Director of Historic Saint Mary's Commission, Maryland.

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29. Regina Faden, Oral Interview by author, September 18, 2014, Slave Dwelling Conference, Savannah, GA.

30. Terrell Dempsey, *Courier-Post*, February 16, 2002.

On the positive, his global legacy which has endured time, speaks of his status. He was able to enjoy fans during his lifetime. One brief example speaks volumes. It has already been established that Twain was a frequent visitor on Henry Rogers' yacht, Kanawha. In April 1907, Twain and Rogers cruised to the opening of the Jamestown Exposition in Virginia. Twain's public popularity was such that many fans took boats out to the Kanawha at anchor in hopes of getting a glimpse of him. They called out his name. The gathering of boats around the yacht became a safety hazard. The Sylvester came so close it grazed the Kanawha. When Clemens finally obliged by coming on deck and waving to the crowds, they got so excited that it made matters more hazardous. So the captain had to reposition the boat so Twain and others could safely attend the festivities.[31]

He was an American idol who appealed across the classes but not across all the biases. Black and white Christian groups and African-American groups resisted much of his work. From a literary lens, there are contemporary black humorists and satirists who value his work. However, historically, there have been well publicized issues with some of his work that does not accurately portray African-American culture—for example, their objection to the use of Nigger 219 times in *Huck Finn.*

Still, there is the tender story of Mary Ann Cord, separated from her husband and seven children during slavery, to be reunited with one son after the Emancipation Proclamation. Further, there is the account of a rented slave house boy in Hannibal who irritated young Sam Clemens because he sang incessantly. After complaining to his

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31. Michael Sheldon, *Mark Twain: Man in White: The Grand Adventure of His Final Years* (New York: Random House, 2010), 55.

mother, her response was that he had been taken from his mother and if singing eased his pain, he could sing as much as he needed. As an adult, Twain referred to that story which undoubtedly made an impression for a life time. Yet, it was one of many contradictions that may have helped him become the observer of both sides of the coin. He was being taught by his family and the church that slavery was acceptable, unconditionally, and that it was normal. As he journeyed through life he seemed to struggle to unknot many of his beliefs related to race, especially those so deeply ingrained on those of African heritage. Two final contradictions are about his actual birth date which may directly impact his credibility as hypocritical, or feed into the inaccuracies of myth.

Though there is overwhelming evidence that supports his pen name origin associated with his steamboat piloting, there is an opinion that it refers to a pun relating to a level of alcohol consumption at a bar he frequented in Nevada named Mark Twain. Finally, on the day of his funeral, a friend was quoted in the *New York Times*. Judge C.C. Goodwin, a veteran editor, stated Twain was shy of his eightieth birthday; he continued by saying "I know he said he was only 75...but when we were in Virginia City, Nevada Mark Twain was older than I was, and I am 78. Here's a record of it."[32] He opened a book of biographies by Amelia J. Carver published in 1899. There it was: Samuel L. Clemens, November 30, 1830. While the article positions Goodson as a friend and Judge with the book in hand, there are some possibilities. Twain could have, as many young people do, fibbed about his age to get a job. Maybe that is why he was forgiving when they discovered Katy Leary posed as being older than she was to get the job as lady's

32. *New York Times*, April 23, 1910.

maid. Perhaps it was a temporary lie that got printed, under other circumstances. Who's to say where the truth can be found in these contradictions relating to the man, the master, and the myth?

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION: THE RESOLUTION

Men have never understood the words of the wise. So gold, instead of being seen as a symbol of evolution, became the basis of conflict.[1]

-Paulo Coelho

Paulo Coelho's words in the quotation above have several applications to this study of hypocrisy towards servants. Similar to Twain's use of "gilded," Coelho also uses gold because it has evolved the farthest of all metals. He says when something evolves, everything around it evolves. However, when the only focus is on gold, men never find truth in understanding or true success because they have forgotten that other metals have their own purpose. The Gilded Age emphasized and exaggerated the American standard of gold and the fact that people who acquired it were synonymous with its worth. The wisdom of this norm dispenses with respect for all people regardless of their financial net worth. The fallacy of building a society of inequality based on the rhetoric of *equality for all* is fundamentally hypocritical. This principle, when ingrained from birth and experienced in every facet of the culture is undoubtedly difficult to rethink. Rather than seeking how the country could evolve with equal recognition and respect for all, America chose to allow double standards to dictate biases of class, gender, and race. When the ruling minority chooses to misuse power to control all aspects of a culture to satisfy their endless appetite for more money, more power, and more control, the proletariat ruling

1. Paulo Coelho, *The Alchemist* (New York: Harper One Publishers, 2006), 137.

minority, but population majority, will remain the large cheap labor base. This system is designed for a specified number of lower-class, unskilled workers; between 1870 and 1900, this is exactly where domestic servants were grouped.

Differentiation of class based on net worth served as the frame for a system of social hierarchy. Within that frame was the standard of patriarchy. Coupled, the frame and the standard as the foundation meant that wealthy white males were superior to all others. Though many of them evolved into the status of wealth as did Samuel Clemens, few seemed to attend to changing customary protocol. This patriarchal system muffled women's purpose, talents, and dreams, while Native Indian and African-American women vied for the lowest ranking among women. They were solely dependent on their cultural groups for validation. The negative stereotypes and societal boundaries were more difficult to overcome for African-American females and males because they lacked what every other cultural group owned: a sense of their ancestral heritage and cultural customs; the opportunity to be judged for their character first, rather than skin, which often left no room for further opinion or the opportunity to participate in the American society in fair play. Everything positive about Africa was hammered out while every negative notion was beaten in.

This condition, coupled with greed as the motivator for acquiring wealth within the society, established hypocritical rules to live by which continued beyond the Gilded Age as the American way. Conflicts arise when a system refuses to recognize or resolve ills comparable to gender bias, racial prejudice, and classism. A society by, of, and for the people that fails to allow its citizens to participate in shaping its course is hypocritical. A

nation that devalues and oppresses its constituents invites uprisings as acts of civil disobedience in attempts for their voices to be heard, and to affect change. A country, no matter how great, that discourages itself to be at peace is bound for self-destruction. It can become personal, not just in the lives of the beleaguered, but those who defend the oppressed. Mark Twain considered himself to be among the defenders. "I am always on the side of the revolutionists," he said, "because there was never a revolution unless there were some oppressive and intolerable conditions against which to revolt."[2] Using his pen, he sought to support the oppressed and expose the hypocrisies he observed.

Apparently, Twain did not view servants among the unskilled workers in the lower class as oppressed. Perhaps his paternalistic lens viewed those in his employ as well-cared for. After all, his wages were equal to or above the national norm and his relationships with long-term servants seemed compatible. Without options for advancement, what would a servant do? Make the most of the situation to survive or in the case of some, be content and well placed in society considering the service a lifelong duty. While individual circumstances differ, Twain missed the mark [pun intended] on the larger scale. In his defense, one must choose his or her battles in life, and Twain certainly chose major ones: taking on the entire political and economic systems in America, Women's Rights, supporting individual African Americans, and Christianity.

The question arises whether or not Twain, his neighbors, and society as a whole, as master(s) have any obligation outside of the realm of being a decent employer to domestic employees. A gesture to offer an option of some degree to up lift servants for

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2. Helen Scott, "The Mark Twain They Didn't Teach in School," *International Socialist Review* 10 (Winter 2000): 61-65.

individual and societal benefits would be more admirable, not as an obligation, but as an act of goodwill. Meaningful training in literacy could have impacted current and future generations of a servant's family, as well as contributing to the betterment of the general public. Any obligation would have arisen from a place consciousness to human condition rather than restrictions of class, gender, or race. Improving the human condition was one of the themes of Progressive ideology in the latter nineteenth century. The overview of progressive thought is that a broad philosophy of progress in all areas of a culture is necessary to improve the human condition. However, these sweeping generalities do not necessarily translate to touching the lives of the two lowest class rungs: unskilled workers including servants and paupers. In the midst of vast and rapid financial progress through industrialization, economic inequality created a problem that was identified but not sincerely addressed.[3] Wealth afforded the time and means to address and contribute to the inequality, and it offered the option of being self-centered, self-indulged, and distanced from the very persons in need, often living under their roofs.

It has been established that Nook Farm residents were not aloof in their consciousness of or their involvement in the social needs of the era. They were not indifferent because the majority demonstrated awareness and participation, and some are credited with affecting change. During the time they lived, the nation was in economic and social chaos. There were many causes among American humanity in need of attention. Nook Farm women had discussions on issues pertaining to women's suffrage, schools for women were established, and rallies, conferences, and marches were all a part of the protest that many of them acted out to raise the level of consciousness with

3. Robert Nisbet, *History of the Idea of Progress* (New York: Basic Books, 1980), 4.

insistence for change. Writers Stowe and Twain dared to force a nation to look at its social ills which could have resulted in literary exile. Twichell and others were forging the rights of Chinese to the point of going out of the country and returning home to lobby for change. A majority were involved in antislavery as abolitionists and continued to support the civil rights of African Americans after the Civil War ended. Their support was for the general good as well as for specific individuals. A few stepped to the front lines by taking a stand in the South and supported efforts to establish schools. It was dangerous for a person and their family and anyone accompanying them to be labeled a "nigger lover."

The American patriarchal society in which they lived had many conflicting messages that seemed to consciously perpetuate a psychological diet of negativity and discord, feeding on prejudices and stereotypes. There is evidence among Nook Farm residents that they were aware of many of the issues and they were, to a degree, open to listen, open to observe, and open to change as they supported equality and diversity. In the process of becoming involved there is often a shift or a significant change in one's convictions and values as in the case of Twain whose writings reflect gradual shifts and eventually change from a narrow-minded southerner to an open-minded global citizen. Some people, however, do not change, even in their own collective issues. In this instance, Isabella Beecher was the only sister of four who did not support women's suffrage. Women like Isabella who supported male dominance did have a problem with hypocrisy; it was an issue of belief. Over time, Twain changed his beliefs and values. His actions reflected those changes.

In the effort to satisfy the glaring question of hypocrisy in the relationship of Twain et al with their servants, a closer look at class distinctions merits examination. Would acts of helping servants improve their lot in life be an indication that employers were not bound by class? This does not include acts for the general good like establishing or supporting schools. Twichell taught religious classes to black female servants rather than providing transportation to attend their churches. He consistently tried to convert people to his faith. Therefore, motivation comes into play because teaching these Baptist black females may have been tied to his Yankee paternalistic attitude that his religion, in the established church of the State, was best.

Equally known for kindness were Stowe and her husband. Harriet boasted of training young black girls from the South who had been slaves to be good house servants. They were instrumental in starting a community school for black and white children in Florida. In Hartford, could time have been allotted for other types of classes which would have helped elevate these women out of the lower class? Was training them to be good house servants the only option these masters and mistresses envisioned? In the wealthy enclave of family and friends with excess space in homes and auxiliary buildings, could a space have been allotted for learning? In a close knit community of like-minded scholars and activists where they were free to make their own rules, there is no record of helping any of the servants out of their lowly state of illiteracy or basic literacy.

The list goes on from house to house in Nook Farm. Even with Sam Clemens and his wife Livy with all of their paternal benevolence towards individuals and causes, there is no record in the volumes of information concerning their lives and those around them

that they helped uplift servants. McAleer had a wife and nine children. Could education for one of the children have ever been in discussion? Griffin was literate and writing samples show he had a good command for the language, grammar, and letter writing. As a private banker, Griffin demonstrated tremendous initiative and potential in the banking and insurance industry. Ironically, Hartford was a major center for both businesses. There is no record of any discussion of education for college or internship in a bank, although when Clemens was looking for investors for his typesetting machine, he included the butler in the list of otherwise white businessmen.

Nook Farm was a seat of wealth and if they did not have the personal means, they had the connections to help servants improve their status in life, or some aspect of self-improvement for personal satisfaction. The spacious surroundings allowed room for a designated space to offer a variety of studies for servants of which the residents and others could have supported. Time was not an issue because the very nature of their lifestyle created an excess of time. In the midst of all the schemes created to fill their time, no time was allotted for the improvement of the lives of servants, even in the servant's limited time off and on work days. If the absence of aiding servants was a question of class, would either master or servant even conceive of a discussion on upward class mobility or simply self-improvement within one's class? Did it not occur to employers to advance servants and improve their lives? Perhaps the confines of class definition limited conceptual progression of servants, therefore restricting servants to children in a plane of paternal benevolence.

The tallies are in and the call is being made. There is no evidence that indicates or proves that Mark Twain or his neighbors were hypocrites by the standard definition. However, there is evidence that fundamental humanistic belief systems were jeopardized under the rule of male dominance in traditional paternal Yankee classist attitudes. Within the unlimited scope of liberalism as a part of the progressive era, those who chose to remain in the cocoon of luxury can be cited as though blinded by the glare of gilded status. If they did not believe servants should cross class lines or considered servitude as a life profession with no sense of servants' dissatisfaction with their place in life, then the conclusion must be that Twain and other employers were not dishonest or conflicted in their actions toward servants.

What then can be assessed about the servants? What were their beliefs about their own lives? What did they perceive to the boundaries of their potential? What were their ambitions? Although we do not have their voices represented, we can make some inferences. They may not have been in a position to discuss their true thoughts in a position that lacked equality. We do know when Katy Leary had the chance, she made a successful leap as a mistress of a boarding house using the life skills and knowledge she had acquired. The potential was always there, but the dream and the desire may not have existed as a possibility. This is an example of Paulo's wisdom in promoting value of each person. In contrast, George Griffin had the desire and demonstrated the potential, but in the banking and insurance business, the country was not ready for him, not even in dedicated service to his own race.

There are rules of conduct in society that function like invisible signs operating as routine portals in our daily lives. Most pass to and fro effortlessly and seemingly without thought, unless a conflict is perceived. In these circumstances our belief system interrupts the comfort level of entry. The decision to enter or not, with ease or discomfort, becomes an opportunity to put a new action into motion or remain in conflict. Possibly the greatest of these is when we are not true to our own belief systems and an internal honor code of conduct is broken, thereby rendering a state of hypocrisy. There is honor in the lives of Mark Twain, his neighbors, and in the lives of their servants. The failure to see beyond the stifling class of servants may be attributed to the national standard of hypocrisy.

The strength of history is that it allows examining evidence, enabling learning from past events in hindsight, and having the opportunity to apply that knowledge in current and future lifetimes. If we compromise the truth in the past, present, or future, we have robbed mankind of the opportunity to learn and make sense of history. This is problematic in a society built on and maintained by a theory of hypocrisy. Hypocrisy as a basis for existence always makes the truth questionable, perpetuating doubt and lack of trust. Is a Baronduki really a terrestrial Siberian squirrel? Will the class system in America ever be one of respect and value citizens equally regardless of race and gender?

Twain knew, as many men did then and now, what Martin Luther King, Jr. stated on January 11, 1968 in a speech at Ohio Northern University: "A law may not change the heart, but it can refrain the heartless."[4] The challenge is to keep pressing for the change of heart. As we saw with Samuel Clemens through his pen, this change may not fully

4. Martin Luther King, Jr. Speech delivered at invitation of Dr. James Udy, Chaplain, Ohio Northwestern University, January 11, 1968, accessed October 14, 2013, http://www.onu.edu/academics/heterick_memorial_library/primary_links/ onu_history_/_archives/onu_history/dr_kings_presen.

occur in a lifetime. Hopefully, each generation can show evidence of progress, despite censure and regardless of a person's occupational positioning.

Servants as unskilled workers were and are the backbone of the American economy, as were slaves. The treatment of this foundational workforce can no longer be ignored by replacing their jobs overseas, treating them as invisible, and being sluggish on domestic labor laws. It is time for America to have an honest discussion about class, gender, and race because the truth refuses to be swept under the rug. The United States has chosen to promote myth rather than face the reality that it is weaker when the majority of constituents are hampered. Still, it can rise again to greatness when all are respected and treated the same. Sacrificing the common good of the country for the benefit of a few has not worked for the long-term health of this nation. Periodic economic panics during the Gilded age in 1873 and 1893 began a trail of repeated collapses through American history until this present time. This examination gives the opportunity to make the past personal as we step into the lives of Mark Twain's family, his servants, and his time. When we step back out into our present circumstances the moment presents the option to do something—to allow the past to inform us and change us—for the better.

Based on his opinion of critique, Twain would not object to using his lens as the frame for this study. In 1870 during the height of the Gilded Age, he said "The public is the only critic whose opinion is worth anything at all."[5] Further, he was the originator of the "tooth and claw" style of criticism to such greats as George Elliot, Jane Austin, and

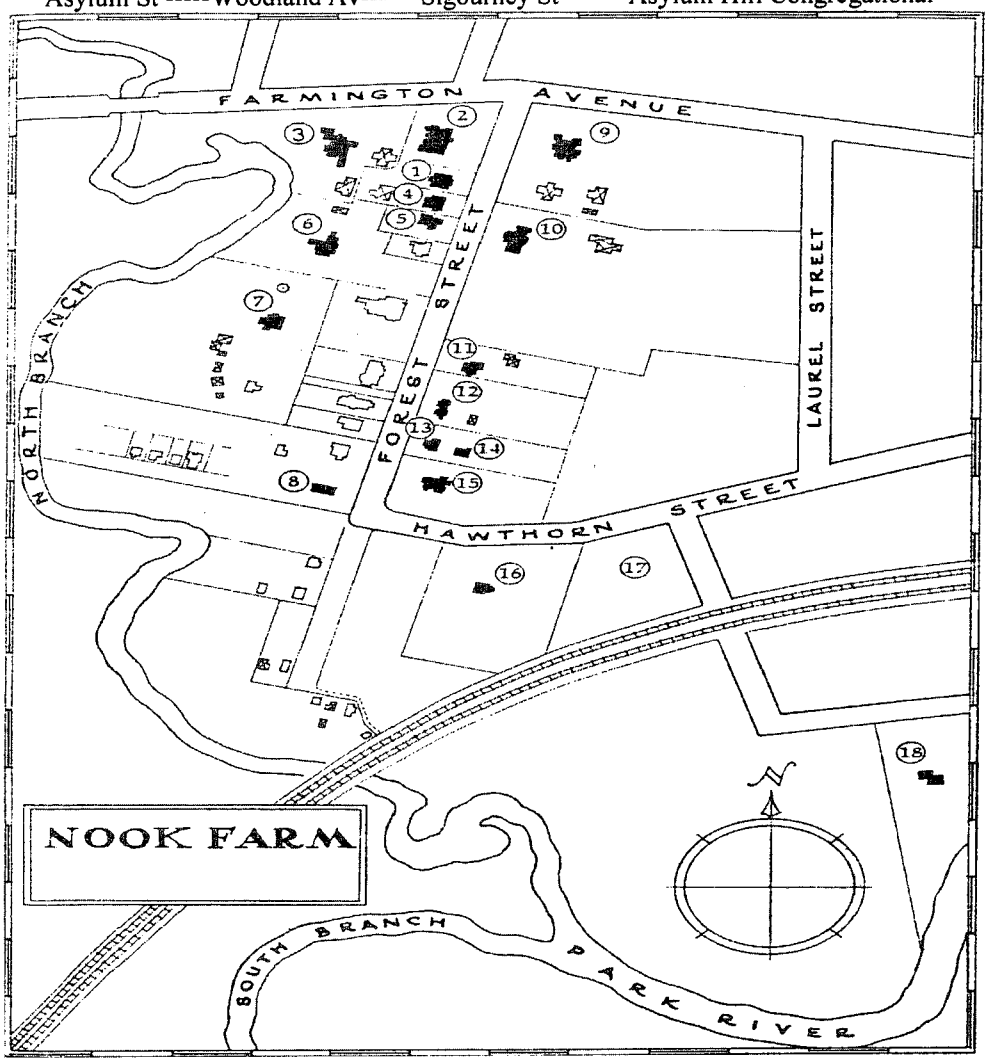
5. Mark Twain, "A General Reply," *Galaxy Monthly Magazine* 10, no. 5 (November 1970): Twain's "Memoranda" column.

Robert Louis Stevenson. It is reasonable to believe he posthumously gives a nod of approval considering this examination appropriate and timely.

APPENDIX A

MAP OF NOOK FARM NEIGHBORHOOD

Asylum St -----Woodland Av------ Sigourney St -------Asylum Hill Congregational



APPENDIX B

LEGEND FOR NOOK FARM

Streets

- So. Marshall St. runs north-south between Forest-Laurel Streets. It did not exist in 1885.

Houses

- Solid black built by 1885.
- Single-line outline built after 1885.
- Buildings with X indicate barns, carriage houses and greenhouses.
- Six houses remained in 2013 (note bold type below).

1. **Harriet Beecher Stowe,** 2nd House 1871 (77 Forest St)
2. **Chamberlin-Day**, 1884 (341 Farmington faces Forest)
3. **Mark Twain/Samuel Clemens,** 1874 (351 Farmington Ave)
4. Hall-Porter, 187
5. Mrs. W. A. Cowles, c.1878
6. Warner, 1873
7. Gillette, 1857
8. Old farmhouse, first home of Gillette family
9. Ellen E. Case.
10. **Charles B. Smith,** 1870s. (66 Forest St)
11. William Wander
12. Emily Fellows
13. **Reverend Nathaniel Burton** (36 Forest St)
14. Edward Hooker
15. **Isabell Hooker,** 1853 (Forest & Hawthorn between 2 apt bldgs.)
16. Perkins-Warner-Hepburn, 1855 (Hawthorn St)
17. *Joseph and Harriette F. Hawley, 1860-1867 (Hawthorn St)
18. "Oakholm," first Stowe House, built 1864.(below Hawthorn on Stowe St)

Source: Harriet Beecher Stowe Center, 77 Forest Street, Hartford, CT HarrietBeecherStowe.org.

Author's notes: *Property purchased but no home built. Six houses remaining in 2015. The carriage houses of Clemens and Chamberlain remain.

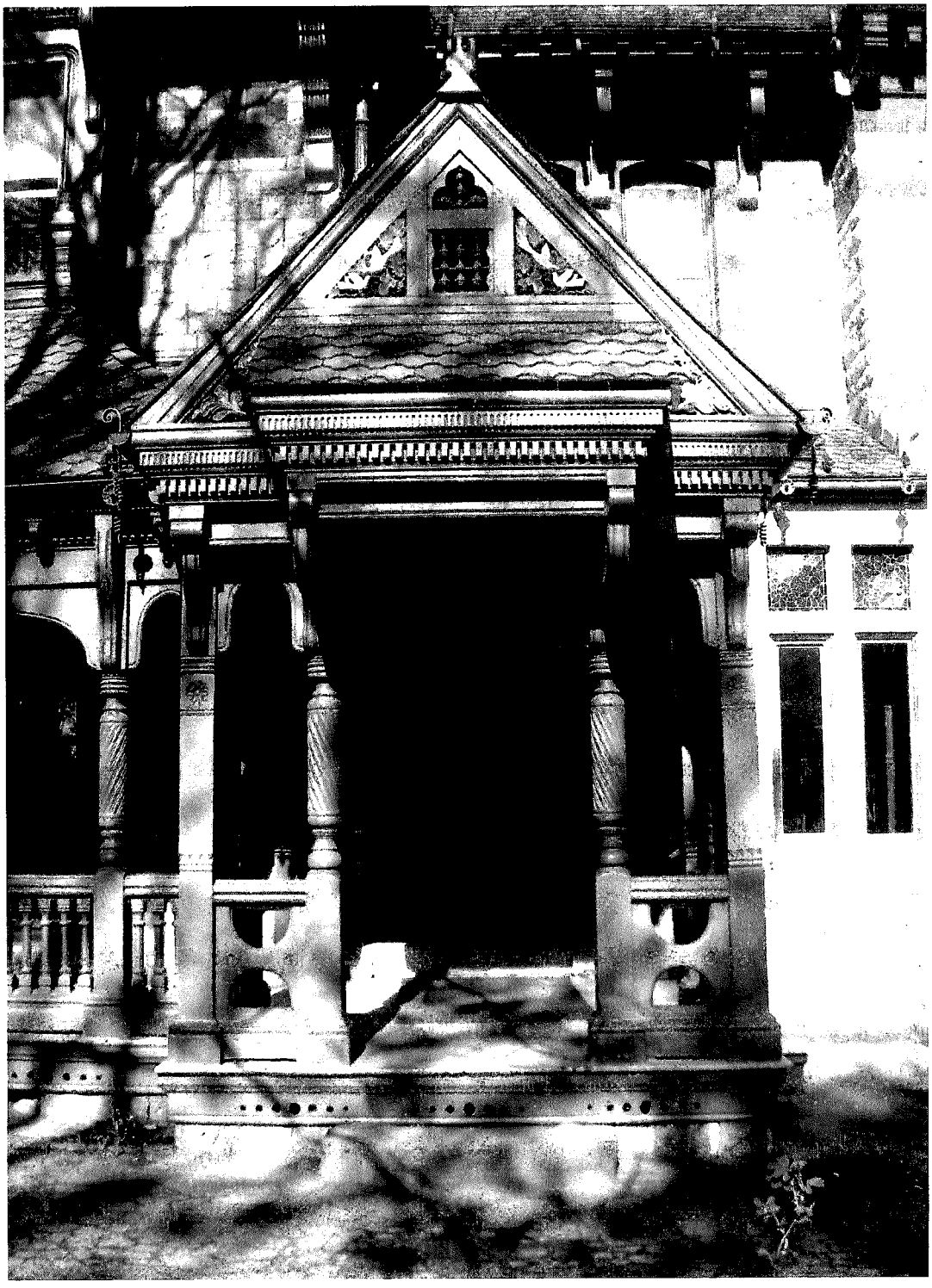
APPENDIX C

PHOTOGRAPHS OF REMAINING NOOK FARM HOUSES IN 2015

Frank and Mary Chamberlain's front entrance
(Stowe retirement "cottage" in view)

Source: Photographs taken by Bonnyeclaire Smith-Stewart in 2013

Frank and Mary Chamberlain's front door

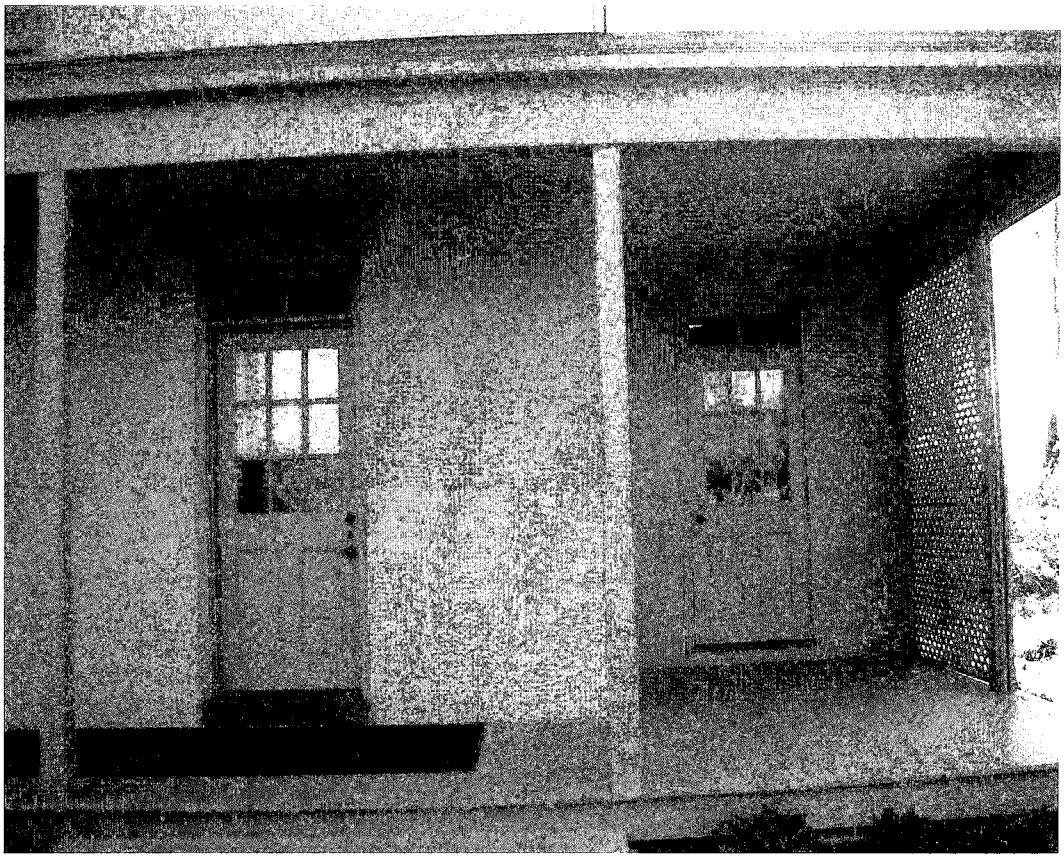


Chamberlain's 2 back doors

Kitchen door (Middle door was a 2nd kitchen window) Servant/Delivery door

Rev. Calvin and Harriet Beecher Stowe's retirement home "cottage's" front door

Stowe: 2 back doors

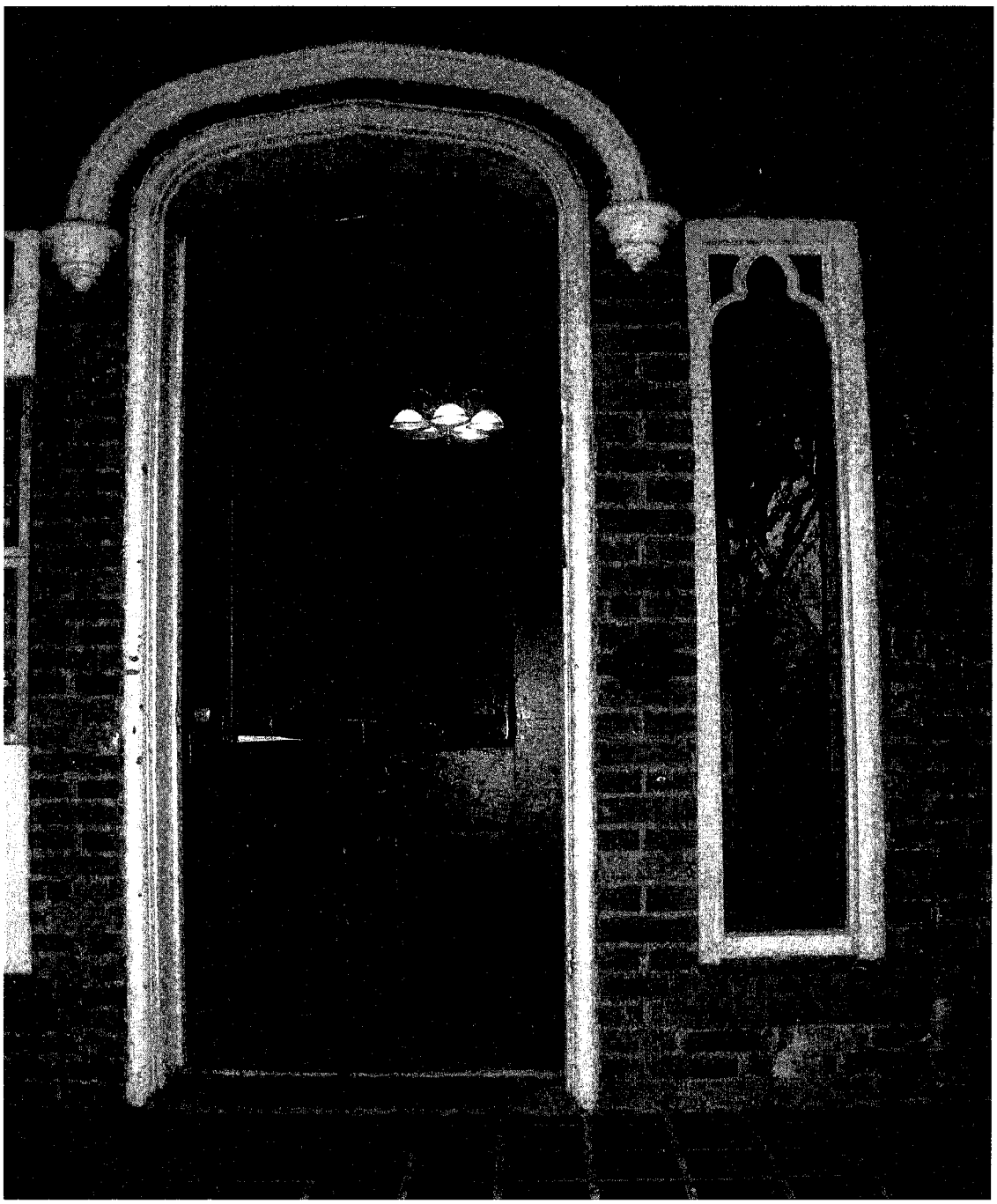


Kitchen door

Servant/Delivery door
(Lattice screen shielded servants from street view when they sat on the porch)

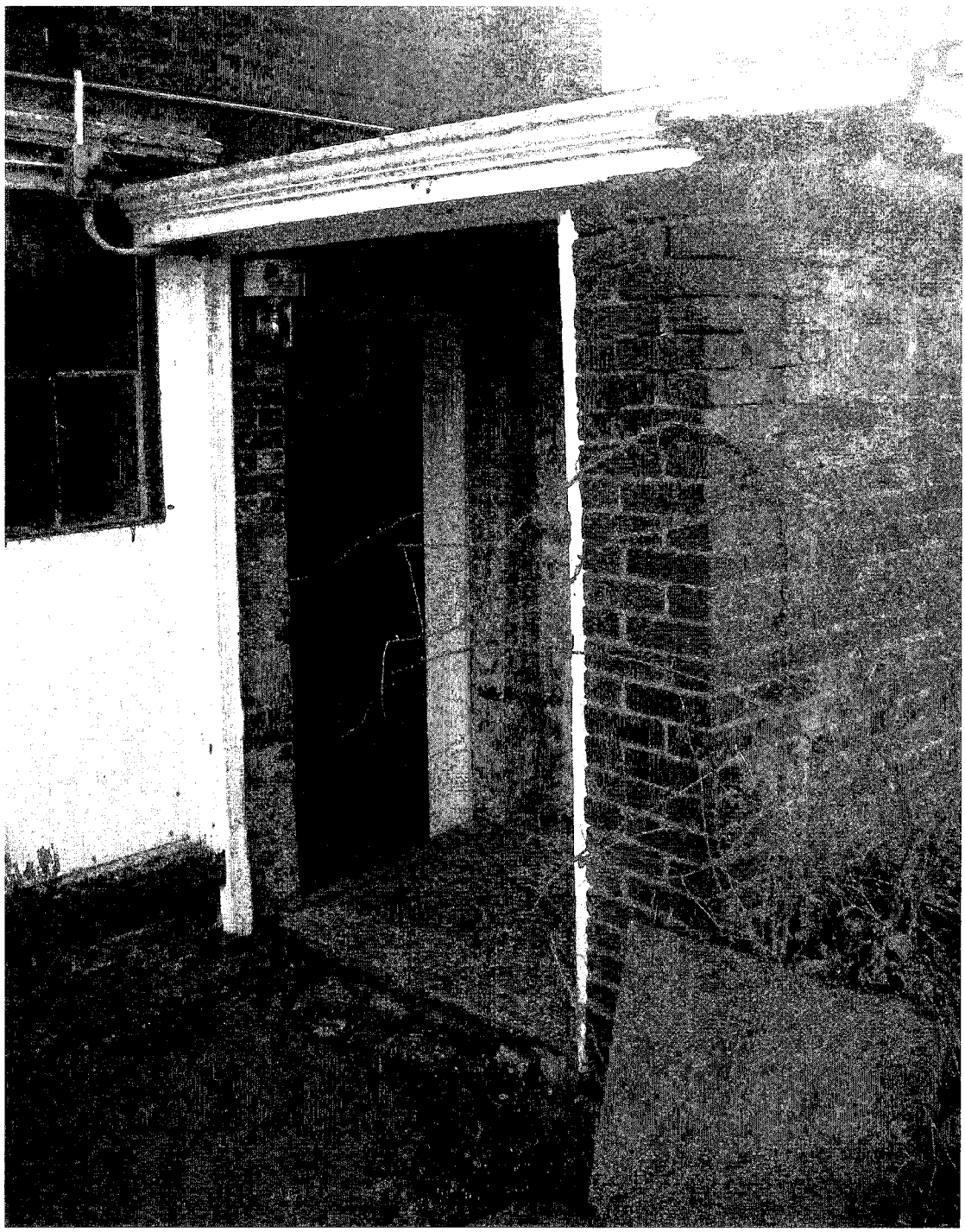
John and Isabella Hooker's front entrance with portico

John and Isabella's front door



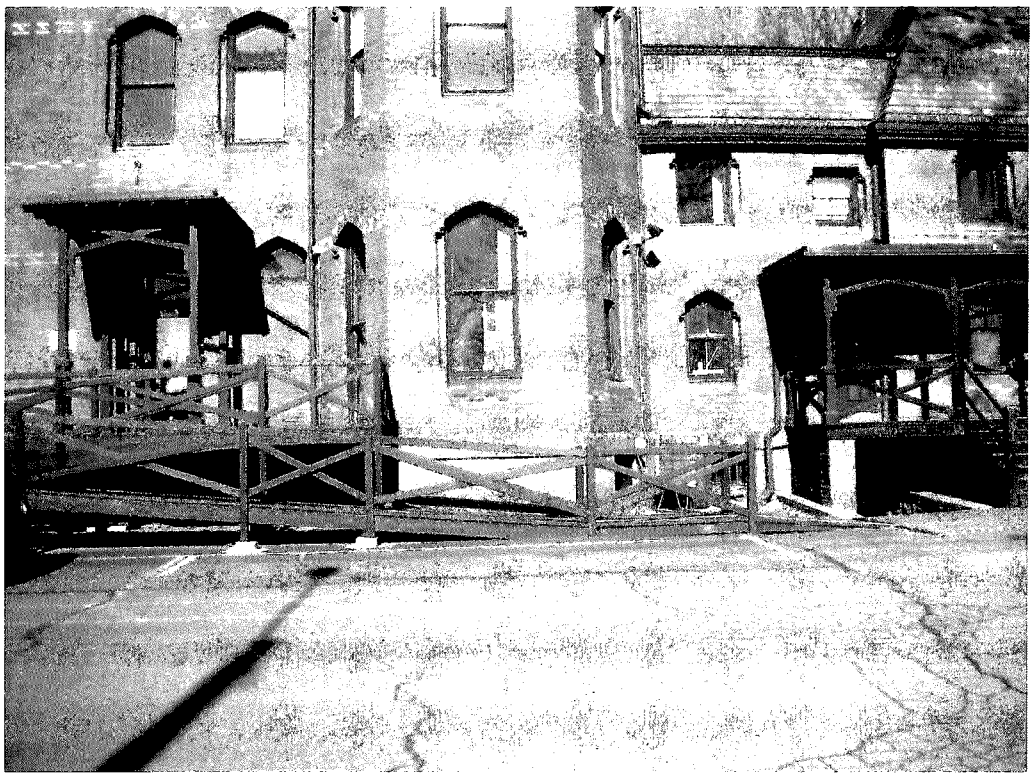
John and Isabella Hooker's back door to kitchen

John and Isabella Hooker's 2 back basement doors beneath kitchen



Charles Boardman and Eliza T. Smith's front door

Charles B. and Eliza T. Smith's 3 back doors

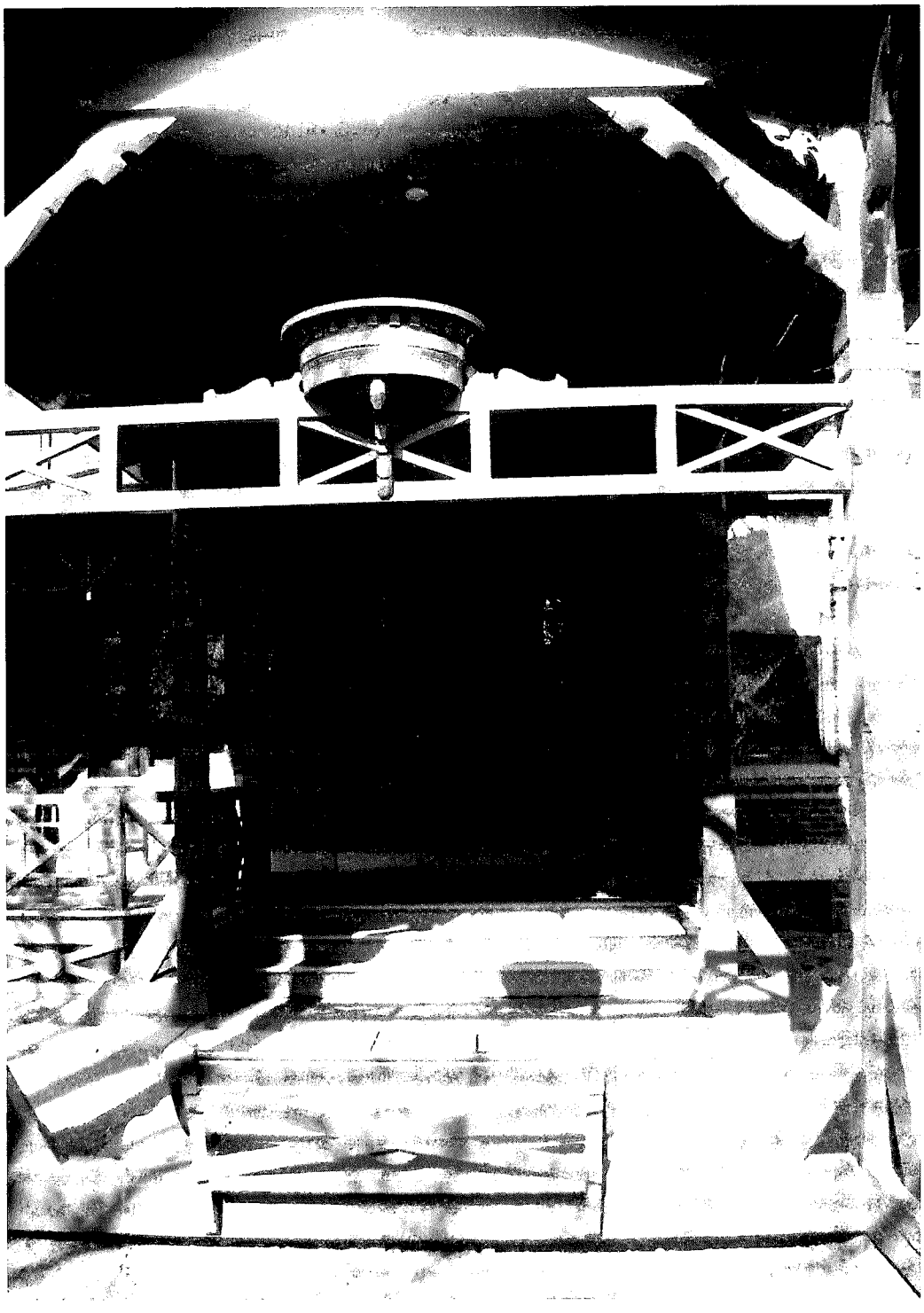


Servant door

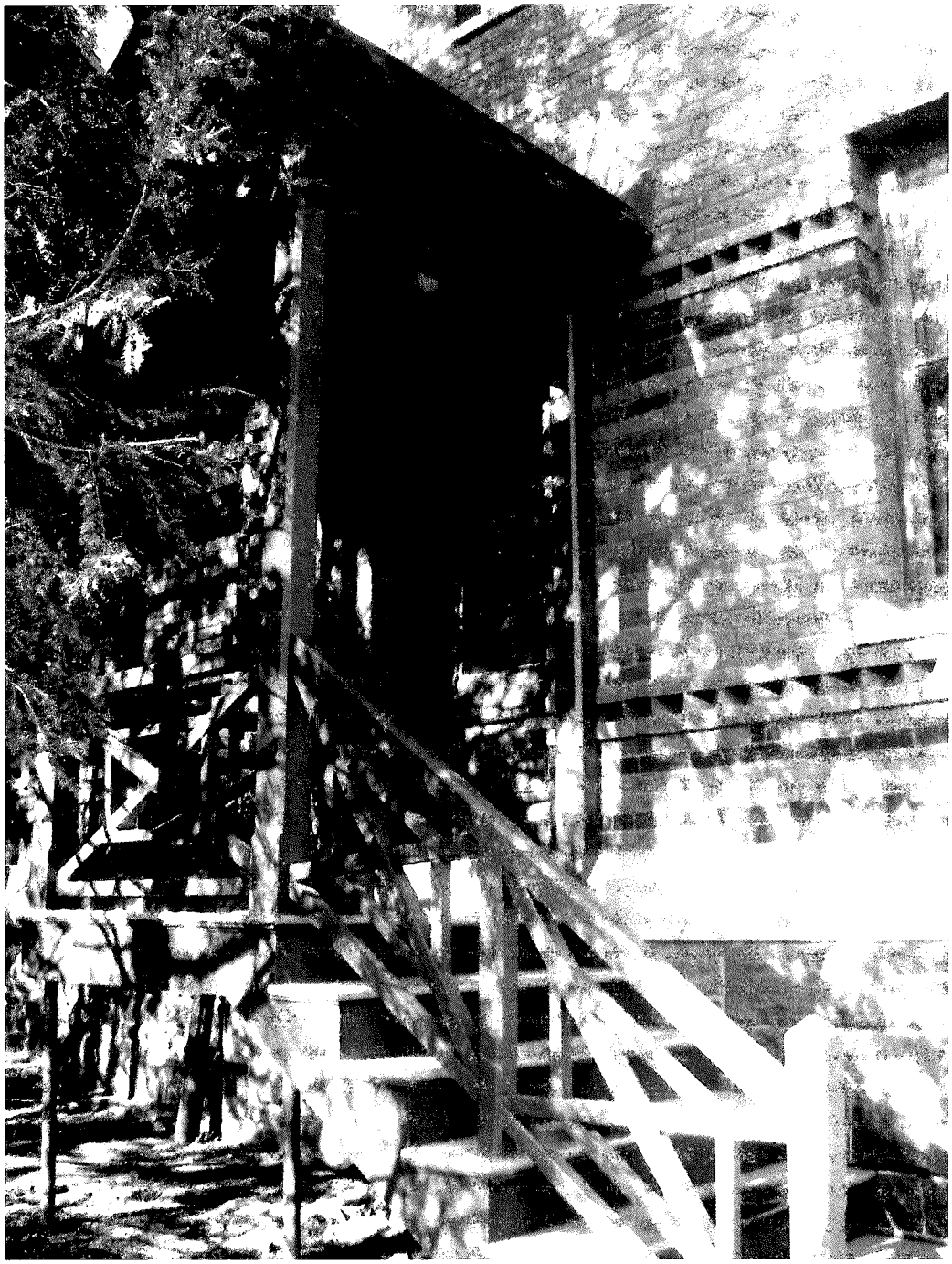
Lower cellar door beneath kitchen door

Chamberlain house in front
Clemens house in rear shows wide common lawn plaza between homes

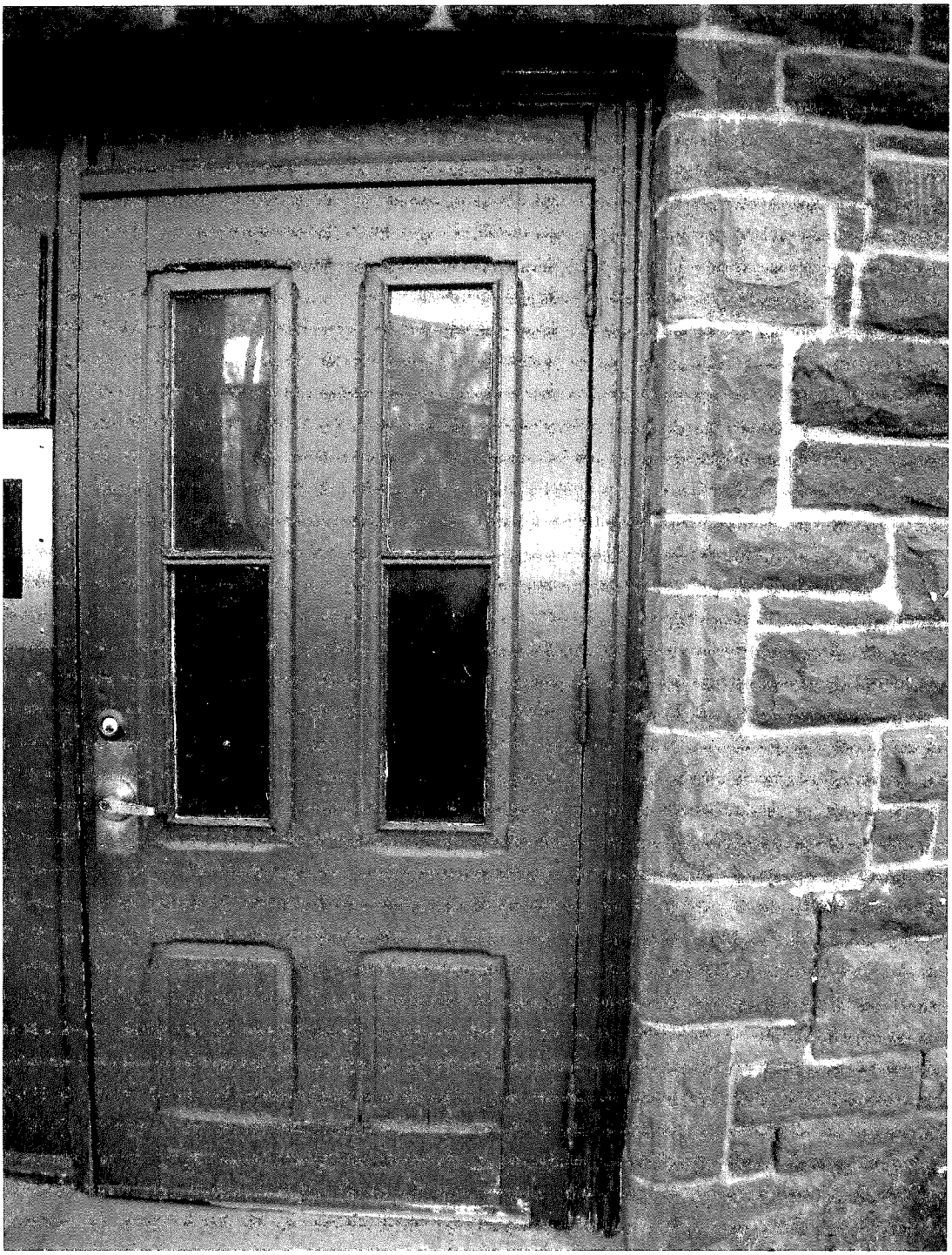
Samuel L. (Mark Twain) and Olivia L. Clemens' front entrance with porte cochère



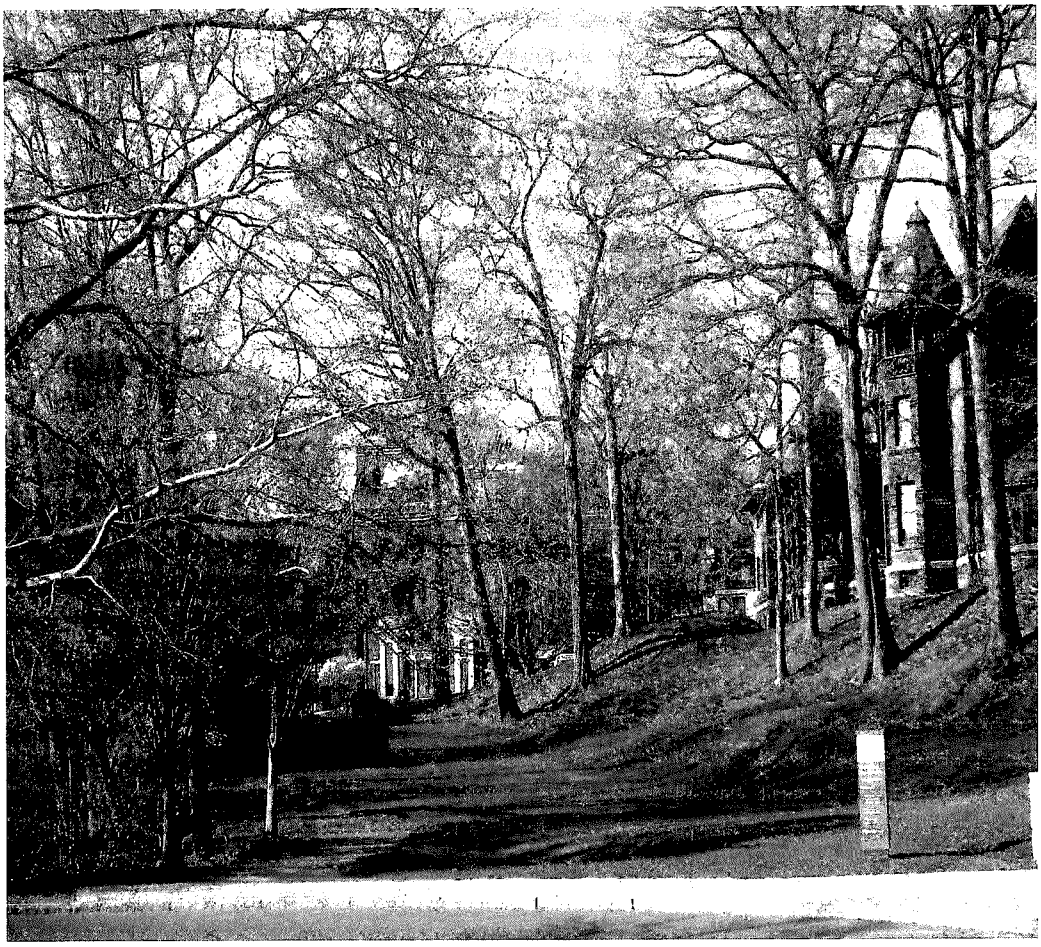
Samuel and Olivia Clemens' back door to kitchen and servants entry



Samuel and Olivia Clemens' 2nd back door to cellar service entry



Samuel and Olivia Clemens' home on the right West side view. The cleared wide path where the Hartford River North Branch flowed beside the house, now runs underground. This image illustrates the sprawling setting of the homes and the luxury of space.



End of Homes Photo Exhibit

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